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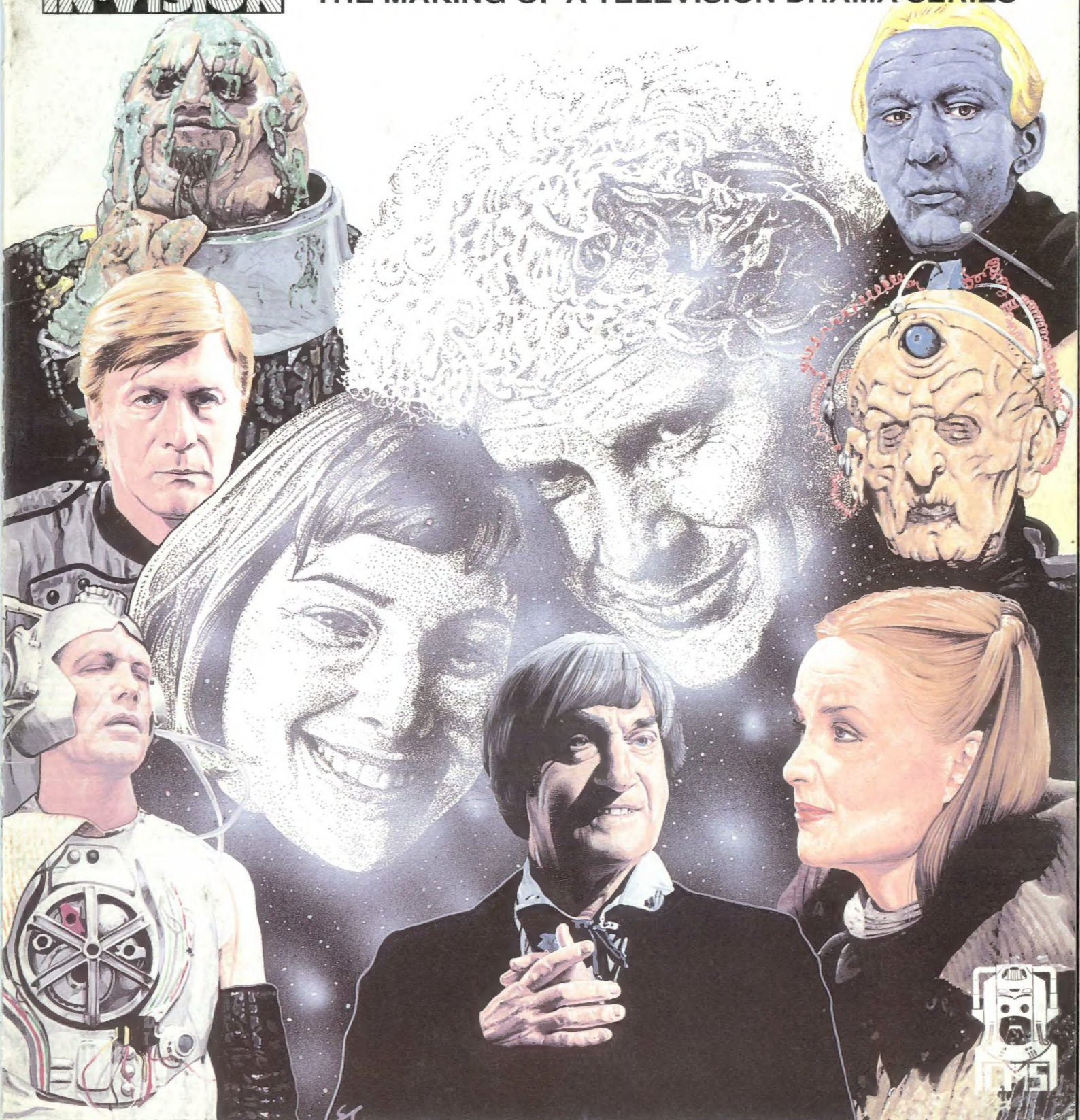
DOCTOR WHO

IN-VISION

SEASON 22 OVERVIEW

THE MAKING OF A TELEVISION DRAMA SERIES



AN INTERRUPTED ODYSSEY

In July 1984, JOHN BOWMAN interviewed Colin Baker for Radio Whiston — the hospital service based at Whiston Hospital, Merseyside, home of Dr Eric Sherwood, the consultant interviewed for *Whose Doctor Who*. In the concluding part of this previously unpublished interview, the Sixth Doctor reveals his thoughts about his tenure at a time when Doctor Who's future seemed assured.

COLIN BAKER's debut as the Doctor, THE TWIN DILEMMA, had caused some controversy among fandom through its portrayal of a manically unstable post-regenerative Doctor. At the time I spoke to him, it was a good question as to whether THE TWIN DILEMMA had shown the true Sixth Doctor, and many fans were waiting to discover whether Baker would be playing a part or defining the role in his own way.

"I think I have to be honest and say the majority is probably me, and I think the reason John thought of me originally for the part is because he saw things in me he thought I could bring to the part.

"He tells a story which it would be immodest of me to repeat in full, but it goes along the lines of we were both invited to the same wedding. It was a girl who had been the floor manager on ARC OF INFINITY, and it was one of those days where I was feeling in a jolly mood, and I am told I was being witty and entertaining — I'm blushing at recounting the tale,' he told he radio audience, 'and as result of that that's what made him think of me for the part, and I really do think that because of the nature of the tight rehearsal schedule and the amount of work that there is involved in making **Doctor Who** that you can't really waste time getting into a character which is totally alien to your own every time you do it. So it's quite sensible to cast quite close to what you expect the Doctor to be and, I mean I'm not saying, for instance, that I'm playing the Doctor the same as Paul Merroney, because I'm not, it's quite a different part entirely, but I am the same person, I am the same flesh and blood, I have the same voice, I have the same eyes, nose, ears, teeth, so there are going to be similarities.

"I am always very surprised when people say about actors: 'Oh, he's just the same as he was in the other part'. I think even the greatest actors, in the sense that they're talking about are just the same, but some people's 'just the same' is more neutral than others. I mean, without naming names, there are some actors who can change instantly by a little bit of make-up — because their face looks different you assume that the performance is different. But I don't really think we are as varied in our performances as we actually think we are… How did I get onto that? I wandered off down a blind alley! Let me get back to the subject we were talking about.

"What I particularly wanted from the part was, there are certain aspects of my predecessors which, I think, are integral to the Doctor. I mean, I'll just pick out adjectives, it's simplest: William Hartnell's irascibility I liked and his occasional total change of mood. I want that very much to be a part of my Doctor — that he's never predictable. One time he might react with sympathy and understanding, another time, total lack of interest. He is an alien, he comes for a place called Gallifrey, therefore his moods and temperaments will not be the same. He's very feeling, but he's not sentimental. For instance, at the end of TWIN DILEMMA when he left the character who had stayed on the planet to look after things, he wasn't the slightest bit interested in saying goodbye, and Peri got upset about it, and he explained: 'Look, I'm not of your planet. I'm going to behave differently'.

"I think it's very important that the fears should be real fears. If a monster is approaching towards you, you don't offer it a jelly baby. It's really important that the fears for the safety of the Doctor and his companions must be very real, so he should take those kinds of dangers seriously."

"Patrick Troughton has some wonderful moments of about 17 things going on in his mind at the same time and pointing one way and going another, and all that sort of thing. I like that. Not doing the obvious. I want him to be intensely cerebral although not necessarily show it. The brain is his most powerful weapon, but [it should also show in] frenzied bursts of activity. Now, I personally enjoy all the sort of stunt side of things, so I want the fights to look like real fights. I can't bear namby-pamby fights [where] people fall over and nobody's anywhere near them. I'm not saying that's ever happened before, but in other programmes I've seen it, and if it's not real it's not worth doing."

But there were some aspects of his debut performance Baker wanted to leave behind. "I think that the cowardice that was displayed in the first episode was only a result of the bad regeneration rather than anything else." That prompted me to comment that perhaps that would be a good thing to keep on — making the character more vulnerable than Davison was and then having the shock of seeing the Doctor attack his companion. But Baker was of a different mind. "No, I don't think we can carry on attacking poor old Peri, bless her. It's not fair. That was purely the effects of regeneration."

This led on to a point he was keen to stress. "I think it's very important in **Doctor Who** that the fears should be real fears. I think that if a monster is approaching towards you, with all due respect to any of my predecessors, you don't offer it a jelly baby, because if you do that the people watching aren't going to be frightened either. I think it's really important that the fears for the safety of the Doctor and his companions must be very real, so I think he should take those kinds of dangers seriously. And I think he should be no respecter of authority unless it's deserved."

That Colin Baker had drawn his Doctor from his predecessors was obvious. But his clothes take their eccentricity to a new level. Asked if he had any ideas on how he wanted the Doctor dressed, Baker responded: "I found it very difficult. I actually couldn't some up with ideas. I spent a long time through books on costume and things like that and thinking what period would suit me.

"The one I would have liked to have gone for is impossible — the sort of thing the Master wears. I rather like all that sort of dark and brooding stuff, but you can't have two people dressed like that." Instead, the sixth Doctor wears the exact reverse of a dark, brooding outfit — a garish coat of many colours. "The idea wasn't mine, it was John's, but which I do love is bad taste. I mean the clothes. I think it's a wonderful idea that he has no idea whatsoever about, couldn't care less about what he looks like or anybody else looks like, for instance."

"It was John who said he had this idea of bad taste, and he went to the costume designer, a lovely lady called Pat Godfrey, and said: 'Look, I want you to design something with bad taste', and she came up with the most wonderful designs. She was trying to make clashing colours, but because she is such a good designer she couldn't do a bad drawing and so we really had to keep sending them back saying: 'No, that's much too nice' until she came up with this, which, actually, has grown on me. At first, I thought it was faintly horrendous, but now I think like everybody else people have said 'We hated it at first but now we've grown to rather like it'. It has complemented Doctor number six rather well, actually. Lots of different things all jammed together into one short space!

"My contribution was the cat on the lapel. It's become sort of almost de rigueur that the Doctor has some kind of emblem. Peter had his celery and there was the yo-yo and the flute and the jelly babies and things like that, and I thought the cat, for several reasons. I do hasten to add we're not going to have a Fe-Line, as has been suggested! It's purely a badge on his lapel. It may have other significances which we are yet to discover, but if I may misquote whoever it was that said it, there's a

IN-VISION
Season 22
Overview

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quote that goes: 'I am the cat who walks by himself, and all places and times are the same to me', and I think it rather suits the Doctor; he is his own person. He will be friendly when he wants to be but, like a cat, will withdraw friendship and do his own thing whenever he wants to as well. I think it's a rather nice image, actually. And of course it can have nine lives! It's quite close, isn't it?!"

Labelling the Doctor "a sort of intergalatic meddling tramp championing the underdog", he added: "In a sort of way it's almost guerrilla warfare, because every planet he lands on he's fighting against the establishment on the side of the oppressed minority — about half of the stories deal with the liberalisation of the oppressed. It's got undertones of King Arthur, the Knights of the Round Table, chivalry is still around.

Which leads on nicely to oppressors... "Well, I've just finished working with the Cybermen, which was wonderful, and met people like David Banks, who plays the Cyber Leader. He is wonderful, he's very, very good. And it's so important that inside those costumes you have good actors, and it doesn't half show, because, obviously, when we are rehearsing we don't have the costumes on for a week so you're standing there with three or four men around you pretending to be Cybermen and talking in that strange, stilted way which is electronically treated afterwards, and David Banks is such a good actor that it shows through the suits, like anyone who does mime or anything like that knows that if your intentions are right and you're thinking right, it will show through a brick wall. That was good fun." He also hoped to tackle "ones that have been off the scene for some time", adding: "I thought the Autons were splendid — that kind of faceless horror. I like the more humanoid monsters. As a child, I was always frightened by the thing that looked normal and wasn't. Something that's large and got millions of tentacles is, particularly when done on a small budget which **Doctor Who** is, liable to produce more derision than it is belief, whereas the one that is nearly human but not quite and relies on acting is much more frightening.

"We all intellectually realise that the Dalek is a pepperpot with a lollipop sticking out of the front, that all you have to do is go up three steps and he can't follow you, and you realise that in fact it's almost ludicrous as an enemy, and yet we are all terrified of it. "I said to my wife: 'You must come and watch a recording', and she said: "I'm not coming if the Daleks are there', and I thought she meant because it would spoil her illusions. No — it's because she's frightened of them and she knows they've got green, wiggly things inside them, because she saw it once when she was hiding behind the sofa. And I think it's wonderful it still does have that kind of pull on people. I think that each generation is sort of plonked in front of it by the previous generation who hid behind the sofa when the Daleks came on, and the reason overseas viewers love it is because of the Englishness."

"It's got that kind of Englishness to it. If you compare it with **Star Trek,** *Star Wars*, **Battleship Galatica**, it doesn't have any of the mammoth effects, it doesn't have any of the hi-tech model shots and things like that. It's almost string and Plasticine, you can see the joins, but it has a kind of... it's very BBC, it's very English, and if it changed I'm sure it wouldn't be successful. If they tried to compete in the world of the expensive American movies it would fail dismally."

It's an opinion based in a wide-ranging knowledge of science fiction of all kinds — screen and page, concept and spectacle. "I read a fair bit and I, actually, it's sort of unfashionable to say so now but I actually read a lot of science fiction. I think some if the fans are quite amazed that a **Doctor Who** actually enjoys science fiction, but I always have done, and I have my favourite authors, like Ursula Le Guin, Anne McCaffrey, people like that I read at the moment." It's a PR officer's dream — **Doctor Who** reads science fiction — but the interest is genuine... unlike some other hobbies. "I used to invent hobbies because I thought: 'My God, I've got no hobbies. What kind of boring person are you?' And I once invented a hobby of lapidary — I said: 'Oh yeah, I'm into lapidary', and they said: 'What's that?' and I said: "Well, it's polishing gemstones and things, it's collecting stones and polishing them up'. [Pause] I got hundreds of letters from lapidary societies and things like that inviting me to join them, and I thought: 'Perhaps I shouldn't tell these fibs!' But now I'm doing **Doctor Who** there isn't much time for anything in the realms of pastimes, because I tend to leave early in the morning and get back in the evening and then I have to learn my lines. I enjoy the company of friends, in this business and out of it. In the past, for instance, at this time of the year if I wasn't working I'd be helping my local farmer, doing a bit of haymaking. It's actually quite good to get away from the artificial world that I inhabit a lot of the time and get into the real world of the people who actually work the soil and produce something out of it."

Free time wasn't something to worry about just then, though. "**Doctor Who** takes up nine months a year, and during that time I have visits — I've been to America a couple of times already, I'm 'nipping over' to Chicago in November to a monster **Doctor Who** convention there where I shall meet for the first time people like Jon Pertwee and Elisabeth Sladen. Then when I finish, I might well go out to Sweden and direct a play quickly — to get into something quite different. Or I might just stay at home and relax for a month before we start again on the next lot. But it does mean that three months every year I can do something different if I want to."

But how long would he keep to that routine? At the time of the interview, the show had entered its 21st year, and there was no reason to think it should not continue forever. In hindsight, Baker's feelings seem ironic.

"It'll go on forever, I'm sure it will, and when you think the Doctor has 12 regenerations we're not even halfway yet — well, heaven help us, because I intend to stay around for about 30 years! That's the other question I get asked, of course: 'How long are you going to stay?' The wrong time to ask somebody is at the beginning. I'm enjoying it so much now that I can't envisage ever stopping doing it, but common sense tells me that a time will probably come when I think: 'Let someone else have a go'. I'm sure the public will get sick to death of the sight of me!"

Unfortunately, they never got that chance.

I•V

With thanks to Mark Phillips for technical assistance

"May I just finally add to all those of you who are in hospital at the moment that you're not forgotten — we are all thinking about you, we want you to work very hard at getting well, so you can come out and watch Doctor Who ! Seriously, look after yourselves, and to all of you who are working so wonderfully in hospital for so little reward, I think you should be paid more than any stupid actor who's doing a silly television series. Thank you for what you do for us. Take care of yourselves."

Colin Baker

"I dismissed the whole thing out-of-court. Arrogance, maybe, but I couldn't believe that such a major decision had been made without any form of discussion with the front office. It was inconceivable."

John Nathan-Turner, *DWM 239*, June 1996.

ARMAGEDDON FACTORS

In IN•VISION 78 KEVIN DAVIES and JEREMY BENTHAM traced movements in the broadcasting chess game that worked to the disadvantage of Doctor Who. In this second instalment the strategy of attack becomes more obvious. But while fallout in terms of the show's production hiatus and subsequently truncated seasons were plain to see, the reasons offered for these decisions were anything but clear...

"NEVER PUT down to conspiracy what you can more accurately blame on incompetence".

Initial press coverage in 1985 painted the cancellation of the original **Doctor Who** Season 23 as part of a fiendish plot by BBC senior managers to lever a rise in the license subscription. Later comment, away from the glare of headlines, more accurately discerned that the corporation was short of money due to its early launch of Breakfast TV, start-up costs for the 'new soap' **EastEnders** and government policy that was fairly ambivalent towards BBC management throughout the eighties, a conflict which would reach its conclusion with the forced resignation of Director General Alasdair Milne the following year.

It would be neat and almost conveniently easy to layer **Doctor Who**'s fate into some grand master plan by the Beeb's sixth floor aimed at bloodying the Thatcher government, restoring public confidence in BBC programme making, and balancing its books. But conspiracies rely on conspirators at least being able to agree the same story, or at least acting towards the same goal. As history and hindsight reveal, the BBC's game, if ever it existed, was more akin to a haphazardly played round of pinball than to a carefully worked out chess campaign.

Certain facts, however, are true and beyond misinterpretation. By September 1984 the BBC was in poor shape. Its bid to raise the license fee by over 30% from £46 to over £60 was being openly opposed by the majority of Britain's newspapers, and less openly by a critical government who were pointing at a current rate of inflation of around 8%. And this was, by definition, 22% lower than what the BBC was asking for. At the same time BBC staff levels had reached their highest ever, with just over 29,000 on the payroll, and that contrasted sharply against what Channel 4 was achieving as a broadcaster with just 200 full timers.

Neither were BBC summer schedules showing any improvement in terms of ratings. Coverage of the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics was eclipsed spectacularly by ITV who placed the imported mini-series **V** and **V — The Final Battle** opposite the BBC's prime-time coverage of this hugely expensive sporting event. It might have been a cost-cutting measure on ITV's part, but it's one which hit home; the BBC had to provide full sporting coverage to justify the licence fee, but ITV could win ratings of 10 million-plus after the **News at Ten** with an imported SF series. Eventually, humiliated by these and other recent examples of audience switch-over, BBC1 Controller Alan Hart was made the scapegoat and bumped sideways to become responsible for BBC International Relations.

Hart's replacement was 41-year old media mogul, Michael Grade. Grade's track record was impressive; twelve years with LWT, rising to become Director of Programmes with a direct remit to challenge the BBC's then supremacy in drama output. His success in this endeavour was what prompted the Corporation to offer him a lucrative deal if he could repeat such achievements as their new Controller of BBC1.

Among Grade's first duties was contributing ideas towards a solving the corporation's debt problem, incurred by rising internal costs and by the launch of Breakfast TV in January 1983. Unable to resolve the staffing question (Grade would later bring on board a former LWT colleague to do this — John Birt) he addressed the ratings issue by diverting significant BBC investment money towards the acquisition of Central Television's Elstree studios. Elstree had been up for grabs since March, following the completion of Central's new studio complex in Nottingham, itself the result of 1981's ITV franchise changes, when the Midlands ITV station was pressured to produce more of its output in its own area.

Buying Elstree would give the BBC much needed back-lot space on which to build standing sets — exteriors that did not have to be torn down at the completion of a day/week/month's shooting. BBC1's new soap opera — **EastEnders** — would be the prime beneficiary of such a move with 104 episodes per year, which could now be made far more cost effectively. So too would productions such as **Allo Allo**, which could significantly cut their design and scenery costs by having tailor-made outside locations permanently available — a factor which would allow the BBC to produce a US-friendly 26-episode season of their *second*-best-selling export.

The problem was, buying Elstree put an even greater strain on 1984's budget balancing act. Hence a sixth floor, meeting, towards the end of 1984, that settled the fate, among others, of **Juliet Bravo**, **Crackerjack**, **Come Dancing**, **Dallas** and... **Doctor Who**. Or rather, that was the intention...

The first show announced to be axed was **Dallas**, a glossy American super-soap that had gained world-wide recognition for its infamous "Who shot J.R?" storyline that had even resulted in questions openly being debated during Presidential press gatherings in Washington. Partly as a consequence of this global publicity hype, the cost of new episodes of **Dallas** had soared, hence Grade's decision, on a principle that no show is worth "that much", to decline the BBC's option on a new season. Thames TV then stepped into the breach, prompting Grade to announce that the BBC might leave the remaining episodes of the current season unscreened, or even schedule them opposite Thames' screenings.

The British Press jumped on this move will glee, fuelling a public outcry over cancellation of a much-watched programme. Grade was forced to rethink his decision, under pressure by Director-General, Alasdair Milne, who (privately) expressed a view that he had under-estimated the strength of public fervour, while the Thames TV chief who'd outbid the BBC, Bryan Cowgill, was forced to withdraw the purchase and step aside. Whether or not the Press got to hear of Grade and Milne's head-to-head over **Dallas** is not known, but it was a 'denting of the armour'-type story that journalists worldwide loved to exploit.

Neither was it the first time in recent years that the BBC had tried to kill off a popular programme, only to face an assault by the press. A scant year or two earlier the wartime prisoner-of-war drama **Tenko** had faced abrupt cancellation, only to reap a whirlwind of protest. The BBC response there was to outwardly agree to continue the series, but inwardly to appoint a new Producer, Vere Lorrimer, with a mandate that the show be "naturally" wound-up by the end of this new season.

The decision to 'rest' **Doctor Who**, alongside a raft of other shows that never came back, was settled sometime in late January/early February 1985, but the question remains, why was the news so badly communicated?

Writing his memoirs for ***Doctor Who** Magazine*, Producer John Nathan-Turner claims to have known nothing of the intended body blow before going off to attend a U.S convention at the end of Season 22, despite hearing grapevine rumours beforehand from, among others, writer Robert Holmes.

On his return from the States Nathan-Turner was summoned before his Head of Department, Jonathan Powell (who had replaced David Reid during 1984) and told that **Doctor Who** was indeed being dropped from the 1985 production schedule due to financial shortfalls. Understandably gutted the stunned Producer asked bluntly if the programme was to blame. "He reassured me it wasn't" wrote Nathan-Turner. "(He) said I and my resident team should take a well-earned rest, start thinking about the next season and get rid of the amazing amount of leave I'd built up."

"I called the BBC and asked how they were going to save money when it made a profit overseas. They told me it didn't work like that, because of internal accountancy. I did suggest that if they wanted to save money they could try sacking the internal accountants..."

Douglas Adams, at Imperial College's HG Wells Society, November 1985

If that account is correct, that the hiatus was solely due to budget problems, then it conflicts with the version of events relayed to Eric Saward. His impression was that Jonathan Powell favoured halting the series on grounds of bad scripts and consequent poor ratings.

In the days following their notice of cancellation John Nathan-Turner sought, and was granted, an appointment with Michael Grade. According to accounts this meeting yielded little in the way of new information, re-iterating only that the hiatus was due to overt violence in a series which was also producing poor audience figures.

Playing the ratings card was an obvious tactic but one that, if analysed, could not produce sufficient evidence to support its accusation. Firstly, **Doctor Who**'s ratings were not down, they were up. Tom Baker's last season in 1980/81 had netted an average viewer total of just 5.81 million, a poor figure but one blamed squarely on strong competition from **Buck Rogers** that was being network broadcast by ITV. Peter Davison's first year in 1982 saw a big hike, back up to 9.31 million, which was greater than most **Doctor Who** Producers of the Sixties and Seventies had managed as a season average.

True, there was a big drop for 1983, when 6.95 million was the best Season 20 could manage, but Davison's last year managed a rise back to 7.18 million viewers, and Colin Baker's opening season a further rise still to a 7.20 million average audience.

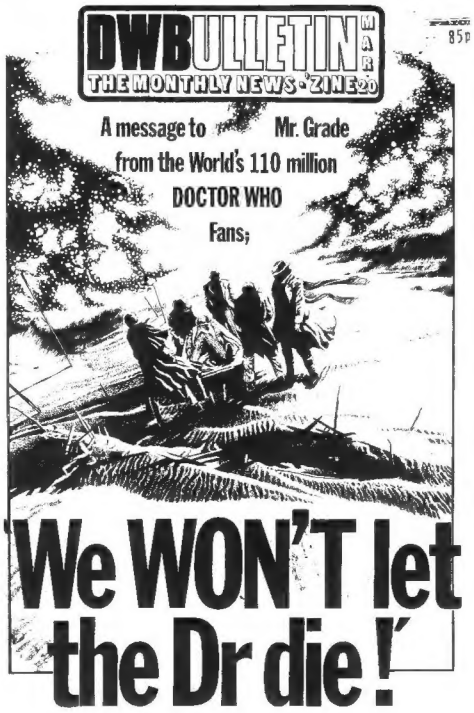
As for the violence angle, that too might have been an acceptable tack to sail down were not the big figures the BBC was chasing on Saturday evenings being attained by **The A Team** and **Robin of Sherwood** on ITV, both of which were facing criticism by viewer watchdogs over violent content.

The final argument was money. As Douglas Adams pointed out, **Doctor Who**'s overseas sales made this argument for cancellation a nonsense — in a commercial company. But despite the urgings of the then Government, the BBC was not a commercial organisation. Keen to protect the purity of its public service ethos, the BBC had ensured that overseas influences on BBC Enterprises were very distant from the production departments which were charged to produce programmes solely for domestic licence payers. If **Doctor Who** were dropped, it might reduce Enterprises' profits and the BBC's income as a whole, but it would free resources within the drama budget and release studio facilities at TV Centre. In addition, if the 6th Floor did consider **Doctor Who**'s overseas sales, they might have felt that 90% of the standard yearly package of 250 episodes was repeats, and assumed such sales would continue regardless, without considering whether those 26 new episodes each year were the 'meat' which sold the entire sandwich.

So that brings us back once more to the vexed question; just what was in the collective mind of BBC senior management when they halted production on **Doctor Who**?

In his phone-call to DWAS co-ordinator, David Saunders, summarised in a BBC Press Release, dated 1 March 1985, Bill Cotton, Managing Director of BBC Television said, "Instead of running it in January 1986 we shall wait until the start of the Autumn schedule , and then **Doctor Who** will be a strong item in the mix.

"We are also going to go back to the old tradition and have 25-minute programmes rather than the 45-minute version running at the moment. We think that is what the public wants. So does the Producer and his team. The 45-



"I didn't understand why we were cancelled. I packed my office bag and was ready to go home thinking I had been sacked. We were told that the **Doctor Who** scripts were too violent and there wasn't enough humour. Jonathan Powell, the Head of Series and Serials, agreed with this statement. But let me explain the process for commissioning a script.

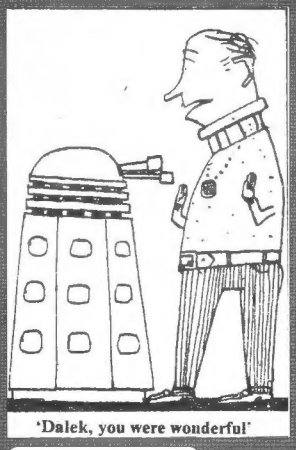
"A script is commissioned by the Production Office. We (John and I) both sign the commissioning form which then goes upstairs to the head of department (Jonathan Powell) who approves the commission. The script is then delivered by he author, the Producer and Script-Editor read it and ask for re-writes if necessary. The finished script is typed up and a copy of the final version is sent back upstairs to Jonathan Powell. His job is to read everything, not just **Doctor Who**, but everything that is to be produced.

"The above procedure was followed for every script for **Doctor Who**. Before we were cancelled we had never had any comment from Powell concerning our scripts. Not one word of criticism, not one word of doubt or consideration, nothing at all. We were then cancelled and told we were doing it wrong. My supposition is that there was some kind of political argy-bargy going on within the BBC."

Eric Saward, DWB 1986

How the cartoonists saw the news...

John Kent, Evening Standard



Barry Fantoni

Bill Caldwell, Daily Star

the Doctor had to go
EXCLUSIVE
SAVE DR WHO!
TIME-traveller Dr Who is facing his biggest enemy ever — the cost-cutting head of BBC TV.
BBC boss Michael Grade wants to take the doctor and his Tardis off the screen to save money.
series are up in arms.
Yesterday some edit
for showed eight-year-
Protesters
Sir, — Who would have thought our old friend Doctor Who would encounter a power crazed madman he couldn't deal with? — Yours
John C. Robertson.
ardis star is
ft forlorn
He's safe!
Pledge by the Beeb
STAR
ATTAC

minute series has been a good experiment, but we need to get back to basics, and to established ways. It also means that with a 25-minute length we can run the series for a greater number of weeks."

Thus, by the end of April 1985, getting a definitive statement of BBC policy towards **Doctor Who** really depended on who was doing the talking. Bill Cotton — due to retire in 1988 — was on record as saying, "I am confident that **Doctor Who** has a great future on BBC1", citing the reason for its hiatus as nothing more than a desire to, "...get the Doctor back onto familiar rails".

Michael Grade was prepared to be more scathing. His response to a *Radio Times* letter in March, plus his comments to Clive James in an April edition of his show, brought up the matter of the BBC needing to save money in 1985. The programme went into the budget cutting frame because, "Long running television series do get tired and it is because we want another 21 years of **Doctor Who** that we have prescribed a good rest."

Totally absent from any public debate was the voice of Jonathan Powell. Where Grade's job was to plan what programmes would appear on BBC1, Powell's role was recruiting and managing the staff who would make them. Jointly with Grade he also held a watching brief on who was being cast to appear in drama productions...

To date Powell's viewpoint on the cancellation has not been heard although it has been alleged that he, like Director of Programmes, Brian Wenham, felt that money being spent on this "tired out" series could be better spent elsewhere.

And it is here that any conspiracy theory truly got blown apart as those players on the public stage shifted their agendas towards what *DWB* magazine would label as 'pro' and 'anti' **Doctor Who** voices.

For all the venom levelled at him by journalists, Michael Grade was eventually judged to be 'pro' in that he did make efforts to find a new direction for the series. He took the programme's original creator, Sydney Newman, out to lunch and invited him to submit ideas that would take the series forward. He even underwrote a £1,000 commissioning fee to Newman for this work. However, although a document was produced and went to the Series and Serials department for discussion, nothing was ever heard from it again. And when Verity Lambert, a friend of Grade's, wrote to him asking if it was his intention to axe the series, he replied it was far from his wish, but he had other department heads who thought differently...

Fan history, on the other hand, has painted Jonathan Powell into the 'anti' corner. Where Grade was known to have queried having Colin Baker continue in the title role, Powell was happy not to make any changes at all; retaining the show's existing Producer and Script-Editor as well as the regular cast. This annoyed Eric Saward almost as much as the postponement.

That **Doctor Who**'s postponement was badly managed is beyond doubt. But, had Fleet Street not reacted the way that it did, seizing it as a golden pretext to engage in nearly two weeks of BBC bashing at a time when the Corporation was particularly sensitive to criticism, reaction might have been limited to a few sacks of protest mail and the odd posse of fans outside the gates of Television Centre.

Greater doubts hang over what individual executives at the BBC read into the notice of Season 23's postponement. How many saw it as a golden opportunity for a revamp or as a permanent axing will probably never be known. But the upshot is that the BBC did have to rethink **Doctor Who**'s future in the wake of so much public wrath and Bill Cotton's March Press statement promises. It had to come back in 1986. It had to come back in the 25-minute format, and there had to be more episodes run than in 1985.

Arguably the Corporation could have done without allocating a substantial production budget for **Doctor Who** in 1986. Go-ahead for work to begin on Chris Boucher's series **Star Cops** had been given, and **The Tripods** was nearly two-thirds of the way through its notional one million pounds plus budget spend for three seasons. Against a backdrop of the Peacock committee beginning its investigation of BBC funding in March 1985, Wenham, Grade and Powell looked ahead to where they could make savings in 1986 as well.

One result of their deliberations was a decision that, when it came back, the **Doctor Who** production schedule would comprise less material than ever before. Twenty episodes was the figure mooted when leaks began circulating as early as April 1985, but on 8 June *The Sun* newspaper got hold of the story and revealed the final figure would be just fourteen — one more than the episode count for Season 22, and therefore fulfilling the letter of Bill Cotton's promise.

A further BBC Press release denied *The Sun*'s allegations, but by this point John Nathan-Turner had already been advised by Powell of the fourteen episode limit, but warned as well that this was a strictly confidential bit of information. Ironically, it was the BBC itself that finally made the information public, when a telex from BBC Enterprises to its USA distributors of **Doctor Who**, Lionheart, advising them of the revised episode count for 1986, was sent to the ***Doctor Who** Fan Club of America* instead.

"You can say that we cocked it up but nothing was ever said till we were cancelled. Powell could have said, "Look here, the scripts are crap, we don't want them, they're awful. Get rid of the Script-Editor, put John Nathan-Turner onto another job, get rid of both of them...", but he didn't! We were then told we were staying on the show.

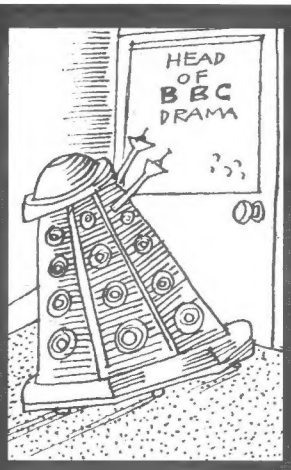
"... What the hell did they want? More humour and less violence is hardly much of a move! John was desperately upset for himself, but we were all upset for ourselves. You consider yourself a professional and you don't mind being criticised or told that you're not doing very well. But the way we were treated was insulting, embarrassing and humiliating!"

Eric Saward for DWB, 1986

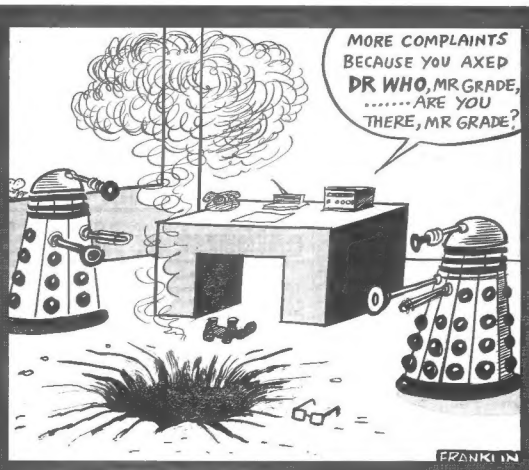
By mid-September 1985 the news was out and fans of the series knew without doubt their show was being cleaved in half. But it was the lack of honesty and good faith that appeared to demoralise so many. The cuts were due to a need to make cost savings, the public were told, and yet production staff were informed it was because their story material was sub-standard. A rest was needed to plan a remodelling of the show, but what came back after this time was a mandate to continue as before, just for less time.

The future for the next 21 years was looking bleak even from the outset.

Mac, Daily Mail



Michael Heath



Franklin, The Sun

ISSUE EIGHTY-FIVE

RADIO SUPPLEMENT

DOCTOR WHO

IN-VISION

SLIPBACK

THE MAKING OF A TELEVISION DRAMA SERIES

ORIGINS:

Michael Grade's decision to rest **Doctor Who** thrust the series into the centre ground of media attention. Almost overnight it was transformed from a long-running series whose latest set of adventures had proved merely mediocre in popularity to a beloved national institution attacked by axe-wielding executives at the BBC.

It made for good copy, ensuring several national newspapers, principally *The Sun*, *Star* and *Mail*, were able to fill column inches for nearly a month with news, speculation, comment and interview features on the beleaguered programme's future.

While the main motive behind Fleet Street's campaigning was undoubtedly the simple desire to sell newspapers, a direct consequence of the hype was a public reawakening to the fact of **Doctor Who**'s existence. Ratings for the last two stories of Season 22 were notably higher. Familiarity with the twenty year old series might have led to it being taken for granted, but there was now a burst of interest in response to the spectre of cancellation.

Nonetheless, by the end of March 1985 there was nothing more to fuel this warm glow of rekindled fervour. The latest TV series had run its course, an eighteen-month hiatus was looming and for the first time in fifteen years there would be no repeats.

As all this was happening BBC Radio 4 was contemplating its summer schedules. For most of the year a large chunk of the station's morning output on FM was given over to educational broadcasts for schools. Between the end of July and early September, however, schools were closed for the annual summer break so the need was to find a way to hold onto some of these children and teenage populations and get them to listen to radio.

The slot under discussion was the period from nine o'clock to noon. The chairman of these discussions was Radio 4 Controller, David Hatch, who proposed, instead of a disparate mix of individual programmes, one three-hour broadcast that would combine a portmanteau of shows under a themed banner. The concept of **Pirate Radio 4** was born.

Part of the aim was to do for radio what **Swap Shop** and **Tiswas** had done for television — produce a wacky hybrid magazine show packed with features and material of interest to a largely teenage audience. The nature of Radio 4 as a talk and drama channel, though, meant that the traditional staple of teenage magazine shows, pop music, could only be covered peripherally. The accent would have to be on drama, comedy and features.

The men appointed to helm **Pirate Radio 4** were light entertainment producer Jonathan James-Moore, who was later to follow in Hatch's footsteps as head of the department before retiring in 1999 as overall Editor, and writer-turned-Producer Paul Spencer. Like many LE producers, Spencer's credits included a lengthy stint on **Week Ending**, the station's long-running blend of topical sketches, satirical monologues and the occasional song that had successfully migrated to radio much of the essence of TV's infamous **That was the Week that Was**. Originally launched by **Hitch-Hiker**'s producer Simon Brett with **Nationwide**'s Michael Barrett as its host, **Week Ending** had provided a launching ground for a variety of comic talent ranging from David Jason to Griff Rhys Jones over the years.

Over the next few months this team commissioned a range of material including *Lill the Biker*, a comedy serial starring Miriam Margolyes, adaptations of Roald Dahl short stories read by Griff Rhys Jones, and a series of topical monologues read out as diary entries by Sue Townsend's schoolboy creation, Adrian Mole. All this would be pulled together by presenter Steve Bracknell whose brief was to host the show as if he were a Radio Caroline-style D.J who had just broken into Radio 4's wavelength. These 'break-ins' would happen on a weekly basis every Thursday.

It is not known whose idea it was to include a **Doctor Who** adventure as part of the line-up. There are strong hints it was a combination of Paul Spencer and David Hatch, with commissioning dates suggesting the project was inspired by media interest in **Doctor Who** around the time of the cancellation. **Week Ending** frequently used **Doctor Who** as source material for sketches, most recently with one marking the latest change in power at the Kremlin, where *Doctor Whobachov* regeneated into an unexpectedly youthful body and went on to confront a Reaganaut and an Iron Lady with the aide of his companion KGB-9. In addition, during his days as writer and performer for **I'm Sorry I'll Read That Again**, David Hatch was co-instigator of a spoof **Doctor Who** serial called *Professor Prune and his Electric Time Trousers*. In that production the eponymous trousers exhibited the same dimensionally transcendental properties as the Doctor's TARDIS...

Auntie says: Use your imagination

IT looks as though the BBC has stumbled upon a cost-cutting secret weapon—radio.

For having yanked the popular Dr Who series off our television screens, allegedly on economy grounds, it now plans to run a Dr Who adventure on radio in July and August.

This certainly has cost-cutting potential.

The listener's own imagination will do, for free, work normally done at great expense by divisions of the Beeb's huge army of scene-shifters and special effects artists.

And, apart from Colin Baker, who plays the doctor, and Nicola Bryant, who plays assistant Peri, do you really need actors in the supporting roles?

Director-General Alasdair Milne could weigh in with some funny voices.

The lines would take no learning. As a good BBC man he need only think of the licence payers' money and they'll come to him instinctively: "Exterminate. Exterminate."

SCRIPT:

Initial contact between Radio 4 and the **Doctor Who** Production Office was established at some point in March 1985. Despite the cancellation the Production Office was still open for business. John Nathan-Turner and his secretary Sarah Lee were still full-time employees of the BBC and even though there were no serials to be produced in 1985, dealing with everything from merchandise applications to fan mail to pre-planning for Season 23 could easily occupy an eight-hour day. Like most producers, John Nathan-Turner also took the opportunity to work on a number of treatments and proposals for new shows that he submitted to his boss, Jonathan Powell, during this period.

Graham Higgins

IN-VISION
Slipback

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None of them were ever accepted.

Originally Jonathan James-Moore asked John Nathan-Turner if he would consider writing the one-hour drama that was up for commission. Although keen, Nathan-Turner accepted he had no experience of writing drama, let alone radio drama, and so suggested they approach the series' Script-Editor, Eric Saward, who held credentials on both counts. The only stipulation Nathan-Turner insisted upon was that **Pirate Radio 4** should use the current line-up of **Doctor Who** regulars, namely Colin Baker and Nicola Bryant.

Due to the cancellation Saward was technically a freelancer again and so could take up the job without fear of union rumblings. Interviewed by Gary Russell for ***Doctor Who** Magazine* in May 1989, Eric Saward recalled the events of April and May 1985.

"There was a young people's thing being mooted at Radio 4... Paul Spencer then contacted me, firstly because I was on the show, and secondly because I had a lot of experience writing for radio. So I was summoned — we chatted and I came up with SLIPBACK. It was originally called *The Doomsday Project* but that got changed because there was a series on television at the time about the Domesday Book — gathered by William the Conqueror in 1066 or whenever [related to the then current project to produce a new catalogue of Britain on computer] — and the powers that be thought they might get confused.

"Writing **Doctor Who** for radio was not that different from writing for television. The whole thing about radio is that you don't dwell too much on the fact that you've only got sound. If you think about **Doctor Who** on television, they're very verbal scripts; they rely on a lot of dialogue. You can't afford too many pauses in **Doctor Who** because it doesn't work very well and you're always looking for good commentary from your characters, because you haven't got a strong visual backing. I mean, the standing jokes are wobbly sets and poor visual effects. They're not as awful as people pretend, but they're not brilliant and you cannot, as in a movie, dwell on visuals.

"So, what could I with **Doctor Who** on radio? The last thing I found I could do was take it desperately seriously as I know a lot of fans want — and indeed, demand. If we did what they wanted, the show would be unwatchable for anyone else."

Whilst its history encompassed movies, stage shows, books, comics and a long-running television series, **Doctor Who** as an audio-only interpretation had run a very thin course. There had been talk in the mid-Sixties of adapting some existing, as well as newly commissioned, scripts into versions for radio that would be broadcast mainly in America. A company called 'Stanmark Productions' claimed to have contracted Peter Cushing to play the Doctor and produced a half-hour pilot with a promise of more to follow. But no evidence exists to suggest any material was ever actually recorded — aside, perhaps, from **Six O'Clock Show** host Danny Baker's otherwise inexplicable 1985 memories of two companions called Mike and Sue, who were to appear in the radio version!

The first true audio-only **Doctor Who** was an adaptation of part six of THE CHASE. Clips from the televised episode were linked by a narration from actor David Graham and cut onto a 21-minute E.P for Century 21 Records. Released in three versions due to licensing problems (with different opening and closing theme music tracks) during 1965, this E.P has since become a much sought-after collector's item, and in many ways was a template for the *Missing Stories* audio cassette collection released by the BBC in the early Nineties.

Music and spoof items aside, **Doctor Who**'s next foray into the audio medium came in 1976 when a Radio 4 regular schools broadcast for geography students, **Exploration Earth,** chose **Doctor Who** as a means by which to unfold, in just twenty minutes, a truncated history of the Earth's evolution. Titled *The Time Machine* it was presented as a drama with a script by Bernard Venables. Reprising their roles as the Doctor and Sarah-Jane were Tom Baker and Elisabeth Sladen. Dick Mills provided all the Radiophonic sound effects and modulated the voice of John Westbrook into that of the booming, titan-like Megron, Chief of Carions who is determined that Earth's evolution should descend into chaos.

Although with an educational bias this drama was played straight, receiving its one and only broadcast on Monday 4 October 1976. So too was the next audio production, ***Doctor Who** and the Pescatons*, similarly produced in 1976 and starring Tom Baker and Elizabeth Sladen. This totally original audio adventure was commissioned by Decca Records from former **Doctor Who** writer Victor Pemberton and released in April on the Argo label in both L.P and cassette form.

In 1979 BBC Records released an abridged version of GENESIS OF THE DALEKS on L.P and cassette, with Tom Baker providing a narration to link the sequences. Baker's voice was again in demand during 1981 to record a soundtrack for the first **Doctor Who** 'talking book' — a 55-minute reading of the Target novel, STATE OF DECAY, adapted by Terrance Dicks from his own script. Pickwick Books released the cassette in the autumn of that year. One final, if abortive, audio project came in 1984, when producers at the Radio 4 radio rep suggested making a 90-minute adaptation of GENESIS OF THE DALEKS for the Saturday night theatre slot, using a new cast to transform the serial into a one-off drama.

"I decided that as I hadn't done a proper tongue-in-cheek story that I'd go for that. It was a gentle send-up of what we were doing over in television. And you haven't got the budget problems on radio — although ironically on SLIPBACK I stuck very much to the infamous corridors, just as we did on television"

Eric Saward, DWM 148, May 1989

The two commissioned original stories, *The Time Machine* and *The Pescatons* both presented straight dramas although neither were particularly well received by fans of the series. Freed from Nathan-Turner's aversion to humour in the series, and pleased with the sly wit he had recently injected into REVELATION OF THE DALEKS, Eric Saward decided to take a leaf out of Douglas Adams' approach to **Doctor Who**...

SCRIPT-EDITING: The parameters for Saward's script were very tight in terms of number of characters. Basically he was allowed about a dozen speaking parts, although many of these would require the cast to 'double-up', performing more than one role apiece.

The structure of radio determined that Saward would be expected to edit his own work. The format of the drama was predetermined by a need to split the story into six ten-minute chunks, each with its own cliff-hanger. At first the idea was that only one ten-minute episode would get broadcast per edition of **Pirate Radio 4**. However, as Jonathan James-Moore continued to refine his schedules, it was felt the magazine format would benefit from having two chunks per edition, hopefully enticing early listeners to stay tuned for part two later in the broadcast.

Layering his script into, on average, 25-page sections, Saward built his cliff-hangers as follows:

1) Exploring the service ducts of the 'Vipod Mor' spaceship the Doctor and Peri hear a threatening roar. Something is now between them and their escape route back to the TARDIS.
2) Cut off from Peri by the sudden closing of a bulkhead door, the Doctor listens in horror as the computer tells him she has now fallen through down a ventilator shaft twelve meters deep (end of episode 'close-up' on the Doctor sequence).
3) As Grant, the disgruntled First Officer, opens fire on the Doctor and Barton, the maintenance drone is hit and a fire ensues. The drone robot speculates this is the end for both of them. There is an explosion.
4) The Doctor has gained access to the computer's inner core. Suddenly he senses an alien mind touching his, seeking his knowledge of time travel. In pain the Doctor screams that the creature is destroying his mind (end of episode 'close-up' on the Doctor sequence).
5) The alien Individual tells the Doctor that Captain Slarn's pustules will soon burst and release the 'mors immedicabalis' — the

VALENTINE DYALL

SLIPBACK marked the final entry in a career which encompassed more than fifty years and as many films for Valentine Dyall. Born on May 7th 1908, his reputation was established during the post-war years when he presented the weekly, late night programme, Appointment with Fear. Labelled 'The Man in Black', Dyall's measured framing of ghost stories, suspense dramas and creepy tales became compulsive listening for millions of Home Service devotees. After the war two films were released that capitalised on Dyall's presence, appropriately named *Appointment with Fear* (1946) and *The Man in Black* (1950).

The son of the actor Franklin Dyall, Dyall always said he was educated at Harrow, Oxford (playing Macbeth for the OUD) and the Old Vic, adding that 'the last house of correction taught him the most.' After stage success in *The Barretts of Wimpole Street, Julius Caesar* and as *Olivier*'s successor in Theatre Royal, his screen career began during the war years, appearing with Peter Cushing in Oliveier's *Henry V*, and playing aristrocratic Germans in films for the renowned directorial team known as The Archers, Michael Powell and Emeric Pressberger. Dyall was also to strike up a long-running partnership with another of post-war Britain's greatest teams, The Goons, substituting for Peter Sellars when the versatile voiceman was unavailable, and appearing in Spike Milligan's *The Great McGonagall.* However, an argument with Hammer Films meant he was left behind at the moment when his radio horror reputation could have meant 'a meal ticket for life.' Nevertheless, he was proud to recount the moment when a stranger bought him a drink, in thanks for all the moments when Dyall's radio performances had 'scared the draws off the wife.' Around this time, he wrote three books, *Unsolved Mysteries, Famous Sea Tragedies* and *Flood of Mutiny.*

As the British film industry dwindled and radio was overtaken by TV, Dyall moved into the new medium, playing the soft-spoken Dr Keldermans throughout all three seasons of Secret Army. His Doctor Who credentials were established in 1978 when Graham Williams asked him if he would consider a cameo episode in the final episode of the *Key to Time* season playing, fittingly, the Black Guardian. His brief appearance, photographed mainly in negative to amplify so dark a persona was an immediate hit with the audience who eagerly anticipated the prospect of a rematch. That rematch was four years in coming but when it did the clash between Guardian and Doctor was spanned out over a twelve-episode trilogy of stories. In between, he assumed the role of Deep Thought, the ultimate compute to find the ultimate answer (previously played by Geoffrey McGivern) for the LP and TV versions of the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy. For the radio version, he lent his sepulchral tones to the disembodied Gargravarr, custodian of the Total Perspective Vortex, in the first episode of season two.

Colin Baker first got to meet Dyall when they guest starred together in an episode of Blake's Seven, CITY AT THE EDGE OF THE WORLD, with Baker playing Bayban the Butcher opposite Dyall as Norl, leader of the people of Keezam. Reportedly Baker was saddened by how ill 77-year old Dyall looked during the recording of SLIPBACK. When at the end of the day he expressed a wish they should work together again, Dyall's comment, doubting he would ever have that pleasure, proved all too prophetic.

Dyall died on June 24, 1985, and was survived by his third wife, Kay Woodman.

Miss Marple (Lorrimer) THE BODY IN THE LIBRARY		*The Case of the Missing Heiress* (Dr. Morelle)	1950
Love's Labour's Lost (Marcade)	1985	*The Case of Charles Peace* (Storyteller)	1949
The Tragedy of Coriolanus (Adrian)	1984	*Helter Skelter*	1949
Britannia Hospital (Mr. Rochester)	1982	*The Man in Black* (Story-Teller)	1949
The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy (Gargravarr)		*The Queen of Spades* (Messenger)	1949
The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy (Deep Thought)		*Woman Hater* (Spencer)	1949
All's Well That Ends Well (The Astringer)	1980	*My Brother's Keeper* (Inspector)	1948
The Old Crowd	1978	*Corridor of Mirrors* (Defense)	1948
Secret Army (Dr. Pascal Keldermans)		*Man on the Run* (Judge Advocate)	1948
Come Play with Me (Minister of Finance)	1977	*The Story of Shirley Yorke* (Edward Holt)	1948
The Slipper and the Rose (2nd Major Domo)	1976	*Vengeance Is Mine* (Charles Heywood)	1948
The Great McGonagall	1974	*The Night Comes Too Soon* (Dr. Clinton)	1947
Bedazzled (Voice of God)	1968	*The White Unicorn* (Storton)	1947
Casino Royale (Voice of Dr. Noah)	1967	*Brief Encounter* (Stephen Lynn)	1946
The Wrong Box (Oliver Pike Harmsworth)	1966	*Caesar and Cleopatra* (First Guardsman)	1946
The Naked World of Harrison Marks (Narrator)	1965	*Latin Quarter* (The Prefect)	1946
The Haunting (Mr. Dudley)	1963	*I Know Where I'm Going!* (Mr. Robinson)	1945
The Horror of It All (Reginald)	1963	*Night Boat to Dublin* (Sir George Bell)	1945
The City of the Dead (Jethro Keane)	1960	*Pink String and Sealing Wax* (Police Inspector)	1945
Night Train for Inverness (Ken)	1960	*Henry V* (Duke of Burgundy)	1944
Suspended Alibi (Inspector Kayes)	1956	*Hotel Reserve* (Mr. Warren Skelton)	1944
The Final Test (Man in Black)	1953	*Silver Fleet* (Markgraf)	1943
Paul Temple Returns (Superintendant Bradley)	1952	*The Life and Death of Cl Blimp* (Von Schonborn)	1943
Ivanhoe (Norman Guard)	1952	*The Yellow Canary* (German Commander)	1943
Room to Let (Dr. Fell)	1950	**The Black Adder** (Angus) WITCHSMELLER PURSUIVANT	
The Body Said No! (John Sutherland)	1950	**Sapphire and Steel** (Radio Broadcast Voice)	1981
Miss Pilgrim's Progress (Superintendant)	1950	**Blake's 7** (Norl) THE CITY AT THE EDGE OF THE WORLD	
Stranger at My Door (Paul Wheeler)	1950	**The Avengers** (Butler) YOU'LL CATCH YOUR DEATH	

```
    incurable death. He, like the rest of the crew,
    will die.
6/FINAL EPISODE) The alien/computer hybrid commits
    suicide, triggering the Big Bang that will
    create the Universe. Appreciating he should have
    known this would happen, he tells Peri they are
    off to the largest library he can find to read
    up on History. (End of story 'close-up' on the
    Doctor sequence).
```

Whether consciously or not Saward drew on many elements from Douglas Adams' **Hitch Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy** as he pulled his storyline together. Captain Slarn permanently immersed in a lava bath, a computer voice with an annoying American accent, a morbid android resigned to its fate and even a reference to poetry causing regurgitation paid homage to Adams' most celebrated work.

A set of workable scripts was delivered in time to meet the May press release announcing that **Doctor Who** would form a main component of BBC's new **Pirate Radio 4** magazine that was due to launch on 25 July.

DIRECTOR AND TEAM:

Again due to the allocation of job roles on radio, SLIPBACK had no separate director. Paul Spencer was expected to fulfil those duties as well, although with the absence of set, costume, make-up and visual effects designers his role was nowhere near as onerous as on television.

The only creative talents Spencer had to work with on his production were Dick Mills and Jonathan Gibbs. Mills' role was key for both the studio and post-production work. On the day of recording he would be on-hand to create all of the electronically modified voices, adding anything from echo to ring modulation. Then, as on a televised **Doctor Who**, he would add all the additional Radiophonic sound effects once an edited tape of the story was available.

For Jonathan Gibbs SLIPBACK would be his fifth outing for **Doctor Who**, having previously tackled THE KING'S DEMONS, WARRIORS OF THE DEEP, VENGEANCE ON VAROS and THE MARK OF THE RANI.

Studio management for the single recording day fell to three experienced BBC technicians, Sarah Rosewarne, Wilfredo Acosta and, in overall charge, Colin Duff. Their role was not just operation of all the recording equipment, but also cueing the artists, generating 'spot' sound effects as required, and even just keeping everybody cheerful during the eight-hour working day. In this latter task Wilf Acosta would prove supremely accomplished. The one other additional member of the crew was Production Secretary, Kate Abercrombie. Two of her main duties would be checking continuity during recording and timing all of the scenes.

Radio budgets being significantly smaller than those for television, the luxury of a large cast could rarely be afforded. In the case of SLIPBACK funds were even tighter as the production formed only a part of the budget allocated to the whole of **Pirate Radio 4**.

The measure applied was two supporting actors for every lead artist engaged. So, with Colin Baker and Nicola Bryant as givens, the payment scheme only ran to the hiring of one more lead, thereby yielding a total cast of nine.

Valentine Dyall was the other 'name' performer chosen. Dyall's experience in radio was vast. His deep, sepulchral voice almost guaranteed him any role that required a dark, malevolent character.

Leading the supporting cast was Dyall's **Secret Army** co-star Ron Pember, as the policeman Seedle. Other members of the cast were drawn from a radio background. Nick Revell and Jon Glover were associates of Paul Spencer from their days together on **Week Ending**, while Alan Thompson was a member of the Radio Drama Repertory Company, and had worked once before on **Doctor Who**, as an extra during location filming for THE SUN MAKERS.

PRODUCTION DIARY

Monday 10 June 1985 The venue for only the second ever BBC **Doctor Who** radio play is studio B11 at Broadcasting House, close to Oxford Circus in the heart of London's West End. Housed in the basement of this famous building, B11 is a large room divided in two by a glass partition. On one side is the control room housing all the recording equipment as well as mixing desks and the Producer's console. On the other, slightly larger, side is the area where the artists perform.

There are seats for the artists to sit when not required, but for a take all actors in a scene must stand and position themselves around one of two floor-mounted microphones and speak their lines when cued. Being radio the actors retain their scripts but there is a skill to backing away and turning a script page without the mikes picking up any rustling noises. The two microphones are set up slightly differently. The first microphone is configured to capture 'flat' speech; vocals without any treatment. The second is set to add a rich echo to anything picked up, thereby adding a false sense of scale to the listener's mind.

Over in one corner of the studio is a small, windowed booth completely lined with foam plastic baffles. This is the 'dead room', so called because, when inside with the door closed, there is a total absence of any background atmospheric sound, echo or reverbera-

tion. Over in the control room Dick Mills has linked some of his equipment to a microphone in the 'dead room'. His task will be to convert the voices of Jane Carr and Alan Thompson into a number of different sounding computers, aliens and robots.

In another part of the main studio is the sound effects area. Wilf Acosta is in charge of operations here. His task, in the days leading up to this morning, has been to pick through the script and identify every sound effect the production might need which the Radiophonic Workshop would not be expected to fulfil. Then, having identified these sounds, he had to find props that could convincingly generate such noises and assemble them in B11. The buttons on a portable cassette recorder, for example, will render the sound of someone typing at a computer keyboard. An empty waste paper bin will yield the noise of Barton the robot being kicked at one point, and so on.

The day begins at ten o'clock with everyone present in the studio. Eric Saward is on hand in the control room with Paul Spencer, in case last minute script changes have to be made and approved. These tend to be few and far between. A minor word change by Colin Baker is approved. A suggestion by Nicola Bryant that Peri would say "cops" instead of "policemen" is turned down...

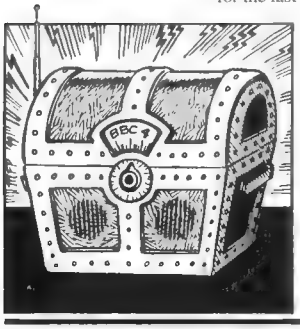
By and large the scenes are recorded in story order, with two reel-to-reel tape recorders whirring away at any one time in case one should fail. Under Spencer's direction most scenes are recorded twice with minor changes of emphasis suggested between takes. Only rarely is Sarah Rosewarne, the acting tape operator, asked to rewind the tapes and go again from the top — a sure indication that the first take has been regarded as a complete disaster by Spencer. A few scenes are deemed perfect and no retakes are requested.

Overall the normal mike is used for everyday speech while the 'reverb' mike is reserved for scenes in the ducting or any of the more open parts of the spaceship. With an hour's worth of material to record — nearly two-thirds the length of an average four-part TV adventure — the pace is cracking. As one scene featuring three members of the cast winds down, they step away from the mike so the next group takes a pace forward to take over the next batch of dialogue. In general scenes are recorded no more than twice.

Sequences involving the 'dead room' tend to be the exception as Paul Spencer goes for an occasional rehearsal to check Dick Mills is giving him exactly the sound he wants. As the ship's computer Jane Carr' lines, played with an American accent are modified to sound like a cross between Sandra Dickinson playing Trillian and Douglas Raines playing HAL from *2001*. As the Inner Voice her lines are given a richer, resonant tone more eloquent of god-aliens in **Star Trek**.

Alan Thompson spends the most time in the 'dead room', being regal as the Time Lord from Gallifrey, morbidly depressed as Service Drone 934, or gutturally primeval as the Maston creature.

With just an hour out for lunch around 1:30 the whole production is wrapped by six o'clock. Spencer announces he is pleased with progress as he thanks and dismisses the artists. As they pose for photographs with staff from ***Doctor Who** Magazine* — who are covering the day — nobody realises they are seeing Valentine Dyall for the last time. A fortnight later his death is announced.



POST-PRODUCTION:

Armed with his master reels Paul Spencer returned to Broadcasting House several times during the ensuing couple of weeks to select and edit down the material into six ten minute segments. The segments were put together either minus reprises or with very brief recaps from the preceding episode. A pre-recorded reading of the cast and crew credits by Jon Glover was kept as a separate soundtrack so it could be added over the theme music during music dubbing sessions at Maida Vale.

Finished versions of the story would have Glover's cast track added to the end of episodes two, four and

RON PEMBER

With his short stature and toothbrush moustache, Ron Pember carved himself a niche in British theatre as the epitome of the post-war working class man, though the characters he played ranged from official functionaries through more risque roles in productions such as **The Naked Civil Servant**. A rare exception to this came with his role alongside Valentine Dyall in **Secret Army**, as the stalwart Belgian farmer Alain. In the theatre, Pember's career was more varied — he co-wrote and composed a musical version of *Jack the Ripper* for the Player's Theatre, Charing Cross. Pember retired a few years after production of SLIPBACK, and reportedly died in the mid-1990s

Suspicion (Ticket Collector)	1987	*Deathline* (Lift operator)	1972
The Chain (Stan)	1985	*Julius Caesar* (Cobbler)	1970
The Invisible Man (Mr. George Hall)	1984	*Oh! What a Lovely War* (Corporal at Station)	1969
Ordeal by Innocence (Ferryman)	1984	*Subterfuge* (Photographer)	1969
Bullshot (Dobbs)	1983	*Curse of the Crimson Altar* (Petrol Attendant)	1968
Rough Cut (Taxi Driver)	1980	*Poor Cow* (Petal)	1967
Murder by Decree (Makins)	1979	**Filthy Rich and Cat-Flap** (Shopkeeper)	A4
Flambards (Drayman)	1978	**Red Dwarf** (Taxman)	BETTER THAN LIFE
Nicholas Nickleby (Mr. Snawley)	1978	**Dear John** (Commissonaire)	1986
Secret Army (Alain)	1977	**The Professionals** (Cobber)	FOXHOLT ON THE ROOF
Glitterball	1977	**Q.E.D.**	THE INFERNAL DEVICE
Aces High (Eliot)	1976	**The Sweeney** (Apps)	DOWN TO YOU, BROTHER
Rogue Male	1976	**Callan** (Albert)	I NEVER WANTED THE JOB
The Land That Time Forgot (Jones)	1975	**Department S** (Driver)	THE GHOST OF MARY BURNHAM
The Naked Civil Servant (Black Cat Owner)	1975	**The Avengers** (Charley)	BIZARRE
Young Winston (Fireman)	1972	**The Saint** (Sam Barlow)	THE PEOPLE IMPORTERS

NICK REVELL

Writer and comedian Nick Revell remains one of radio comedy's best-kept secrets to TV adueicnes, though theyshould recognise his prominent features from a variety of beer adverts. At the time of SLIPBACK's production, Revell had just partnered Andy Hamilton as author and host of the first season of the stand-up sketch show THE MILLION POUND RADIO SHOW, a partnership which would continue for the next five years, encompassing a **Doctor Who** parody reprinted later in this issue, and for one-off specials to mark events such as the general election. Revell would also write episodes of Hamilton's Channel 4 newsroom comedy **Drop the Dead Donkey**.

The Nick Revell Show, a comedy based loosely around Revell's own life as a frustrated writer and his friends at the local pub, but spiced up by the addition of two talking geraniums, followed in the early 1990s, later transferring to television as **N8** for an abortive pilot.

JON GLOVER

Not to be confused with his American namesake, seen as the Devil in **Brimstone**, Glover is an accomplished radio actor who has formed a stalwart of radio comedy shows and dramas for almost twenty years, specialising in roles requiring upper-class period accents. It's this talent which has provided his most prominent screen role, as Mr Chomondly Warner, the patronising anchor of 1950s public information films on **Harry Enfield's Television Programme**.

The Blonde Bombshell (Alan's doctor)	1998	**Harry Enfield's Television Programme** (Mr Chomondley-Warner)	
Spitting Image (voice artist)		**French and Saunders**	A2
The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy (Management Consultant)	Episode Six		

JANE CARR

Born in Loughton, Essex, Jane Carr's SLIPBACK role as an American computer stands out from a career where she's specialised in playing English roles in American programmes, most notably as Louise, the support group leader with an unhealthy interest in 'sexual problems' in the American version of John Sullivan's sitcom **Dear John**, and in the British-set episode of **Friends** which also featured Richard Branson and the Duchess of York. To science fiction fans, she's best remembered as Timov, the anagramatically interesting wife of Londo Mollari in the **Babylon 5** episode SOUL MATES, written by **Doctor Who** fan Peter David.

London Suite (Mrs. Sitgood)	1996	*The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* (Mary)	1969
Here Come the Munsters (Cassie O'Leary)	1995	**George & Leo**	THE CAMEO
Dad, the Angel & Me (Julia)	1995	**Beverly Hills, 90210** (Hairdresser)	PRIDE& PREJUDICE
Perry Mason (Renee Nurian)	THE CASE OF THE FATAL FRAMING	**Caroline in the City** (Mrs. Booth)	CAROLINE AND THE OMBUDSMAN
Menu for Murder (Charlene Voss)	1990	**Mad About You** (Hillary)	MAD ABOUT YOU: PARTS 1/2
Dear John (Louise)		**Babylon 5** (Timov)	SOUL MATES
The Return of the Shaggy Dog	1987	**Ellen** (Glynnis)	SAINT ELLEN
Danny Jones	1971	**Boy Meets World** (Mrs. Bertram)	BOYS II MENSA
Something for Everyone (Lotte Von Ornstein)	1970		

Radio On!

Transfer a cult TV-SF show to radio? Alan Stevens, producer of the Blake's 7 follow-on tapes *The Mark of Kane* and *The Logic of Empire*, considers Eric Saward's attempt to bring Doctor Who to the medium where 'the pictures are better'...

IT'S IMPORTANT to remember that SLIPBACK was a radio story made up of six ten minute episodes, written to slot into a weekly three hour BBC children's magazine programme called Pirate Radio 4. It isn't a TV show, running at its own time as shown in *Radio Times*, but part of a magazine programme which listeners might tune in and out of.

Hence in writing SLIPBACK Eric Saward had to consider one essential fact: that the story had to make sense and be entertaining even if a listener only caught one episode. That is quite a major restriction, but Saward, who started out as a writer for radio before becoming script editor on **Doctor Who**, handles it very well. He constructs a story which has a continuity of location throughout and a plot-line which while very simple, never gets boring and introduces a number of interesting characters. The result is almost like a sketch show with a continuing narrative. He also comes up with some rather good dialogue on occasion, and unlike Barry Letts' two **Doctor Who** radio serials, manages to recreate the atmosphere and feel of this particular era.

It's apparent that when Saward was asked to write **Doctor Who** for radio, he took **The Hitch Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy** as his inspiration. Consequently, aside from the style of humour, there are also a number of character and plot elements which resemble **Hitch Hiker's**. When the Maston chases the Doctor and Peri though the ship's corridors it resembles the Ravenous Bugblatter Beast of Traal's pursuit of Ford and Arthur to the escape pod in episode six of the original radio serial. The Doctor's story about Rudolph Musk using a sonnet to avoid digestion by a splay-footed sceeg recalls the **Hitch-Hiker** tale about Grunthos the Flatulent, the second worst poet in the galaxy, and the ship's objectionable captain Slarn has the revolting personal habits and hatred for stowaways of the Third Worst poet, the Vogon Captain, with the "B" Ark Captain's bath thrown in for good measure. Finally, both stories involve a trip back in time to a predestination paradox. All this "borrowing" isn't a bad thing of course, as Saward has abided by the golden rule of stealing from the best. It would be difficult to think of a more successful example of radio science fiction than **Hitch-Hiker's**, and Douglas Adams' style was already a part of **Doctor Who**'s culture.

SLIPBACK's production is another plus. Quite a lot of money and effort appears to have been spent on it, with the sound effects, background atmospheres and specially composed music all being of a very high standard. The only real flaw is the end of episode cliff-hangers, which mainly consist mainly of Colin Baker screaming "Ruuuuuuuuun", "Periiiiiiiiiiiiii" and "Noooooooo" into the closing theme music. Reportedly, this was the decision of radio producer Paul Spencer, not the writer or Colin Baker, the latter of whom, it is reported, wasn't keen on the idea at all.

Altogether the cast of nine is forced to do some doubling up, this is not at all noticeable. While the cast includes established radio comedians, it's straight actor Ron Pember who provides the most memorable character, playing the homicidal policeman Seedle with a gusto which brings out the black humour of his lines. "I have beaten my fists raw on some of the finest criminals in the galaxy," he tells Peri, later adding "You have the right to remain silent, although I wouldn't encourage you to do so. Anything you say will be taken down, altered to my satisfaction and used in a court of law to send you down for a good many years. So start confessing!" Interestingly, Seedle's partner is called Snatch...

The only performance that is below par comes from Nicola Bryant. On television the viewer could be distracted from Nicola's acting by her other, rather more impressive, attributes, but on radio these physical distractions are lost, and her performance suffers accordingly. It wasn't all Nicola's fault of course — if she hadn't been shackled with a fake American accent in the first place and had been allowed to use her own (much more attractive) tones, Peri might have been much improved, but making her a whining, American cliché with an unhealthy obsession for lycra killed dead any possible character development during her first full season. Present writers with a caricature and that's what they'll see — and that's what they'll write!

Interestingly, Saward appears to come to the same conclusion when characterising the ship's schizophrenic computer. The voice used by the machine to address the crew of the Vipod Mor is a Sandra Dickinson-style American "dizzy dame", whereas the voice the computer uses to express its inner thoughts is cool, articulate and self-assured. The "dizzy dame" voice becomes a mask for its true intent, and although the crew are aware that the computer is a highly sophisticated piece of hardware, the "dizzy dame" voice is subconsciously telling them otherwise and they don't suspect it of subterfuge. A subtle touch, which could be taken as Saward's way of telling us that casting a fake American in the companion role was not his idea, though he could have done more to make her more interesting.

As for the Doctor, Colin Baker is helped tremendously by the fact that he is no longer in competition with that dreadful coat, but Eric Saward seems so fed up with writing for the character by this point that even here, where the Doctor appears to be centre stage, he can't resist locking him up in a room away from the action. In fact the Doctor doesn't contribute anything to the plot at all, and his one attempt at meddling almost causes the universe not to be created. Saward freely admits that he was not particularly in love with Colin Baker's portrayal and as in REVELATION OF THE DALEKS, he prefers to sideline the Doctor and concentrate on the peripheral characters instead. This is all very well, but as the raison d'etre of a series is its central character, you can't then complain when the show is suspended and your lead actor sacked.

Having said all that, SLIPBACK works, and it is something of a surprise to see that although the story has many of the elements to make it a bone-fide part of what is perceived to be **Doctor Who** canon (it's Eric Saward's last produced script for **Doctor Who**, the production and cast are good, the Doctor and Peri are exactly like their screen personas). Yet the story is now all but forgotten, and it doesn't even appear to warrant an **IN-VISION** issue to itself. Perhaps it's simply that to fans and the general public alike, **Doctor Who** is a TV show, and almost by definition, nothing else really counts. I·V

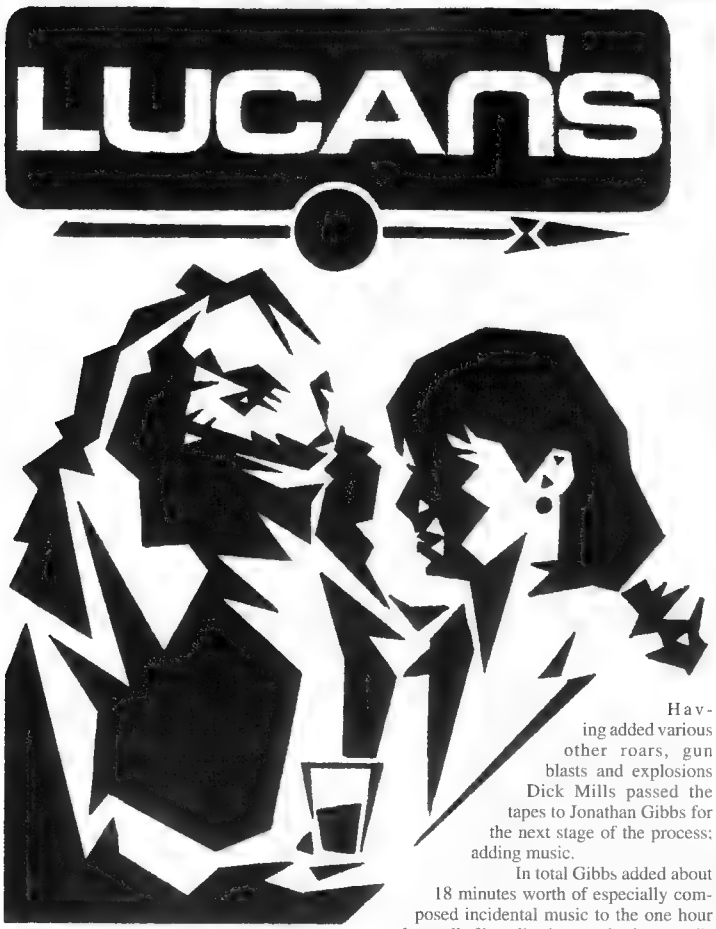
six, although for the later BBC Enterprises cassette tape this would be restricted to just the final episode.

The serial's soundtrack had been recorded in full stereo and good use was made of this facility during editing. During the final episode, for instance, the 'Vipod Mor's' computer voice could be heard on the left channel arguing with its corresponding Inner Voice on the right channel.

To publicise SLIPBACK Paul Spencer, in association with John Nathan-Turner and the BBC Press Office, arranged a photocall in early July outside Broadcasting House. The police box prop was assembled just beyond the famous brass front doors and for the morning Colin Baker and Nicola Bryant were re-united with their costumes from the series; in Nicola's case the blue shorts she had worn in VENGEANCE ON VAROS. To emphasise the radio angle Nicola Bryant was asked to pose with a modern 'ghetto-blaster' radio cassette player, while Colin Baker got to carry a Bakelite valve radio from the Forties.

MUSIC AND SOUND: A shortened arrangement of Peter Howell's version of the **Doctor Who** theme was added to top and tail each of the episodes. Although no-one knew it at the time this would be the last time Howell's theme would represent a contemporary **Doctor Who** broadcast in the Eighties. A new theme would be used on TV from season 23 onwards, although the Howell arrangement would surface again to frame Barry Letts' two **Doctor Who** serials for radio in the Nineties.

Two other stock items from the Radiophonic archive were the TARDIS materialisation sound, and an extract from a piece of 'muzak' Mills had composed years earlier for a play called 'Taptoe Through the Telephones'. This he used in the final episode as the schizophrenic computer argued with itself.



SLIPBACK

Cast:

The Doctor [1-6]	Colin Baker[2,4,6]
Peri [1-6]	Nicola Bryant[2,4,6]
Shellingbourne Grant [1-6]	Jon Glover[2,4]
Mr Bates [1]	Nick Revell[2]
Computer Voice [1-6]	Jane Carr[2,4]
Mutant/Maston [1,2,6]	Alan Thompson
Steward [1,3,5,6]	Alan Thompson[2]
Captain Slarn [2,3,5,6]	Valentine Dyall[2,4,6]
Seedle [3-6]	Ron Pember[4]
Snatch [36]	Nick Revell[4]
Barton (Maintenance Drone 934) [3-4]	Alan Thompson[4]
Time Lord (Vipod Mor) [6]	Alan Thompson

Crew:

Title Music	Ron Grainer
Arranged by	Peter Howell and the Radiophonic Workshop
Incidental Music	Jonathan Gibbs
Special Sound	Dick Mills
Production Secretary	Kate Abercrombie
Studio Managers	Colin Duff, Wilfred Acosta, Sarah Rosewarne
Pirate Radio 4 producer	Jonathan James Moore
Writer	Eric Saward
Producer	Paul Spencer

Recording:
10th June 1985, B11 Broadcasting House

Transmission:
One/Two: 25th July 1985, Radio 4 [10'33", 10.08am; 10'22", 11.44am]
Three/Four: 1st August 1985, Radio 4 [9'50", 10.19am; 11'26", 11.26am]
Five/Six: 8th August 1985, Radio 4 [10'09", 9.44am; 11'36", 11.36am]

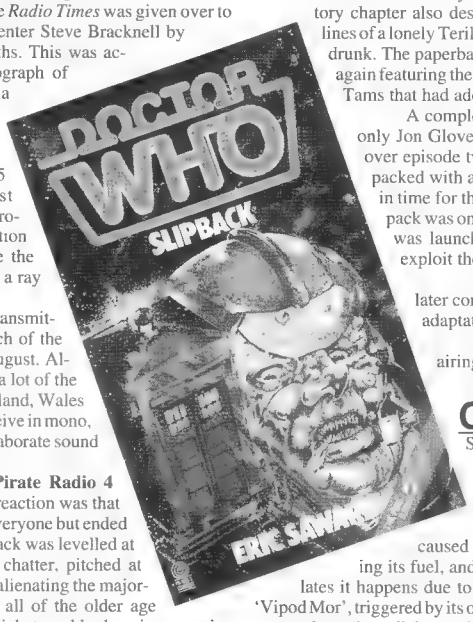
A scene from the book: Peri evades an amorous Terileptil

Having added various other roars, gun blasts and explosions Dick Mills passed the tapes to Jonathan Gibbs for the next stage of the process: adding music.

In total Gibbs added about 18 minutes worth of especially composed incidental music to the one hour show, all of it realised on synthesisers available at the Workshop. For episode three there was a requirement to add some snatches of classical music to one of the lava bath scenes featuring Captain Slarn. 36 seconds and 59 seconds of Satie's 'Gymnopedie No. 1', from a CBS record entitled 'Bournville Selection', arranged by Philippe Entremont, was added to create this background accompaniment.

TRANSMISSION:

In advance of the launch of **Pirate Radio 4**, part of John Craven's *Back Page* feature in the *Radio Times* was given over to an interview with presenter Steve Bracknell by columnist Katie Griffiths. This was accompanied by a photograph of Colin Baker and Nicola Bryant although, strangely, not from the Press call. Inside, on the radio listings page for 25 July, graphic artist Graham Higgins had produced a comic illustration of Colin Baker attempting to scale the rigging of a pirate ship, armed with a ray gun.



The SLIPBACK segments were transmitted close to 10:00 and 11:30 on each of the three broadcast dates in July and August. Although broadcast in full FM stereo, a lot of the country, including nearly all of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, could only receive in mono, so the impact of many of the more elaborate sound effects was lost.

Ratings and feedback on the **Pirate Radio 4** experiment were not good. Overall reaction was that the three-hour show tried to please everyone but ended up by pleasing nobody. Particular flack was levelled at Steve Blacknell whose line in D.J chatter, pitched at children though it was, ended up by alienating the majority of younger listeners as well as all of the older age brackets. Many reviewers of the serial started by heaping praise on its audience for having the sheer stomach to sit through the three-hour experience, waiting for SLIPBACK's segments to begin.

The serial itself fared better, strengthening the case for more of what would ultimately come to fruition in the Nineties. Writing for ***Doctor Who Magazine*** in December 1985, Gary Russell summed up a generally favourable review with the following statement:

"Whatever the outcome SLIPBACK proved that a programme like **Doctor Who** works very well on radio, especially when it has the full resources of the Radiophonic Workshop behind it, plus great acting and a good Producer."

The BBC, however, sided more with critics of the overall format and as a consequence **Pirate Radio 4** sank without trace.

TRIVIA:

Nigel Robinson, Editor of the Target **Doctor Who** book range, commissioned a novelised version of the story from Eric Saward in late 1985. Anxious to give readers nearer the equivalent of a standard four-part story adaptation, Saward extrapolated many of the characters and themes of SLIPBACK, giving more background to Captain Orlous Moston Slarn and his diseases, various changes of body by Shellingbourne Grant, and so on in the same vain. The end result, first published in hardback in August 1986, owed even more to the humorous cosmic meandering of Douglas Adams than the original script had done. The Time Lord featured at the conclusion was identified as Vipod Mor, a renegade who had warned the people of Setna Streen never to develop time travel, setting in motion the creation of the universe by the ship named after him. An introductory chapter also described how Peri evaded the chat-up lines of a lonely Terileptil while the Doctor got unwittingly drunk. The paperback edition appeared in January 1987, again featuring the cover painting by fan artist Paul Mark Tams that had adorned the hardback.

A complete soundtrack of the story — minus only Jon Glover narrating the cast and crew credits over episode two and four's end titles — was twin packed with a re-release of GENESIS OF THE DALEKS in time for the Christmas 1987 market. This twin-pack was only released in audio cassette form and was launched as part of a major campaign to exploit the BBC's archive of radio recordings.

Studio technician Wilfred Acosta later composed the music for Radio 4's 1990 adaptation of **Dan Dare**.

To date SLIPBACK has not had a repeat airing on BBC radio.

CONTINUITY:

SLIPBACK apparently contradicts **Doctor Who** history as established in TERMINUS. This stated that the Terminus vessel caused the big bang by jettisoning its fuel, and yet the radio play stipulates it happens due to an explosion aboard the 'Vipod Mor', triggered by its on-board computer, which causes the 'primordial monoblock' to shatter. A possible explanation would be that Terminus was responsible for the creation of the current universe, destroying the preceding one from which originated, while the Vipod Mor triggered the original Big Bang which created the first of these universes. However, this would mean that the Vipod Mor must have travelled back through the creation of this and previous universes to the birth of the original, surviving at least one Big Bang in the process.

Eco-Daleks!

A few months after Slipback, cast member Nick Revell played a Dalek in his comedy series The Million Pound Radio Show

NICK REVELL: And now for all you science fiction fans...
ANDY HAMILTON: They've taken it off telly...
NICK: But get ready for another thrilling episode of the radio adventures of Doctor Who
THEME MUSIC
DALEK (Nick): [sings] Her name was Lola, she was a showgirl... The Daleks are invincible...
[DING DONG.] Coming... Hello darling, I was just washing up.
DALEK 2 (Andy): Hello Darling, had a nice day?
DALEK 1: Not bad. The rent man called. He said we were in arrears.
DALEK 2: Oh?
DALEK 1: So I exterminated him.
DALEK 2: Fair enough.
DALEK 1: Did you exterminate lots of things today?
DALEK 2: Well... actually... no. I've discovered something that's completely changed my outlook. It's called E-Col-O-Gee.
DALEK 1: What?
DALEK 2: Ecology. It means an awareness of the environment and a respect for other life forms.
DALEK 1: COBBLERS! Other life forms are for exterminating. And what's that you're wearing?
DALEK 2: It's a Save the Earthling badge.
DALEK 1: Mother was right about you. You are wet.
DLAKE 2: I am not wet!
DALEK 1: You are. You're the only Dalek I know who keeps a hamster.
DALEK 2: Leave Cedric out of this.
[THE TARDIS MATERIALISES, WITH A NON-STANDARD SOUND EFFECT!]
DALEK 1: Oh no, it's that bloody Doctor again.
DALEK 2: Which Doctor is it?
DALEK 1: God knows. You no sooner get used to one and they go and change him for a different one. [Loud laughter from the audience, followed by applause!]
DOCTOR: Why, look Sarah Jane, it's my old friends, the Daleks.
SARAH JANE: Oh Doctor, help, help, SCREEEAAAM!
DOCTOR: This is Sarah Jane.
DALEK 1: Doctor... why are your young female assistants always so noisy?
DOCTOR: I don't know really...
SARAH JANE: SCREEEAAAM!
DALEK 1: Exterminate her. She's giving me a headache.
DALEK 2: No, I told you, exterminating is counterproductive. We should protect other life forms.
SARAH JANE: SCREEEEEEAAAAAAM!
DALEK 2: On second thoughts... perhaps I'll just exterminate her.
DOCTOR: Run, Sarah Jane.
DALEK 1: She is getting away.
DALEK 2: Don't worry. She will trip in a very unconvincing manner. They always do.
SARAH JANE: Oh no, I've tripped.
DALEK 2: Told you.
DALEK 1: Fire!
SARAH JANE: SCREAM!
DALEK 2: One hundred and eighty!!!
DOCTOR: Nice shot.
HISSING VOICE: Doctooooor...
DOCTOR: Why, it's my old friends the Ice Warriors...
ICE WARRIOR: We meet at lassst.
DOCTOR: Let go of my throat, old man...
ICE WARRIOR: We have pursued you across many galaxies and through many time vortexes and wobbly cardboard sets, and now we have caught you. You will confess. You will tell us...
DOCTOR: Tell you what?
ICE WARRIOR: What have you done... [breathes]... with our asthma pillssss? [Massive applause and laughter]
DALEK 2: Stop! You're hurting him.
ICE WARRIOR: Stay out of thisss, you motorisssed dussstbin.
DALEK 2: You cannot provoke me. I have studied the teachings of Mahatma Ghandi.
DOCTOR: I've broken free. Quick, into the TARDIS...
DALEK 2: Wait for us. [THE TARDIS TAKES OFF]. I don't like those Ice Warriors, they're rough.
DALEK 1: Wimp. [THE TARDIS LANDS]. Where have we materialised?
DOCTOR: I think it's Earth, around 2468BC.
DALEK 1: It looks like the usual disused quarry just off the M1 to me.
DOCTOR: Look... coming towards us.. a slouched Naenderthal humanoid covered in coarse matted hair, wielding a crudely fashioned club. This is how man began... and he's trying to speak.
CAVEMAN: Che-see. Chel-see. Chel Sea... CHELSEA!
DOCTOR: Quick, everyone back to the TARDIS.
[The TARDIS moves on...]
DALEK 1: Where are we now?
DALEK 2: It's the same disused quarry just off the M1...
DOCTOR: Nonsense...

DOCTOR WHO LIFTS OFF!

DR. WHO and his assistant Peri were yesterday celebrating the lift-off of their radio series.

The inter-galactic pair will be launched next month on a short series of sound-only adventures to be broadcast on Radio 4.

It will help to tide them over until the start of a new TV series in autumn 1986.

This year's planned screenings were axed by the BBC. But there was such an outcry from devoted fans that bosses decided to resurrect the series.

Leading the Fight

DWAS Co-Ordinator DAVID SAUNDERS recalls the hectic days when fandom battled to ensure Doctor Who didn't die quietly - however embarrassing some of the coverage might have been...

The so-called cancellation crisis was probably the most significant event of my six years as a member of the Executive Committee of the *Doctor Who Appreciation Society*. Ironically, it came just as I had given the Society's Executive Committee notice of my intention to step down from the post of Coordinator after the 1985 PanoptiCon that August!

As I chatted to Stephen James Walker on the telephone during the evening of Tuesday, 26th February, the rumour that BBC's new Controller Michael Grade was about to discontinue **Doctor Who** came into the conversation. Less than twelve hours later I discovered that the rumour was most certainly a true one. From 8.00am my phone was almost permanently engaged for the next fifteen hours as I was targetted by the national and regional press for a reaction to the tidings that the *Appreciation Society*'s beloved series was to be no more. I had booked a few days' leave from working in my then-post as a Librarian in the Kensal Rise district of London, little realising when I did so how that time was to be filled!

Colin Baker told me shortly afterwards that he had dialled my number somewhere in the region of 35 times throughout that day in order to commiserate about the situation and always found that the line was busy. John Nathan-Turner, who (as a member of BBC staff) was obliged to withhold official comment, did manage to contact me from a non-BBC line to confirm that he was just as disoriented at the announcement as I and the few fans with whom I had been able to speak, and that the telephone line to the Production Office was besieged by a disbelieving fandom. I subsequently learned that one of the people answering those phones was Patrick Troughton, who was appearing in the story currently being broadcast, THE TWO DOCTORS, and who had volunteered to come in to do so when the news had reached him.

One of the calls I took was from the production staff of BBC1's **Breakfast Time** and I consented to appear on the programme the following morning. Almost immediately I received a similar request from TV-AM's **Good Morning Britain**, which would be aired simultaneously with the BBC programme. Therefore, I contacted the Society's longest serving Executive member, David Howe of the *Society's Reference Department*, who agreed he would appear on the ITV show inmy place. But the entire item was cancelled when the BBC refused to loan ITV any **Doctor Who** clips, and eventually the **Breakfast Time** item was also dropped, officially because Michael Grade was then on holiday and could not be located for comment, but un-officially because word had come down from BBC management that the early morning news vehicle was not to appear to support the questioning of an internal policy decision.

After the evening news broadcasts on both BBC and ITV on the 27th February covered the discontinuation of **Doctor Who**, the next development I learned of was the appearance of Ian Levine on ITV's **News at One** on the next day. Ian was billed as representing the Society, though he was not currently a member and I knew nothing of his booking for the broadcast until after the programme had been aired — quite possibly because my telephone line had been jammed throughout the previous day. To maintain a united front, I decided not to dispute the background to his interview.

Later that day London Weekend Television production staff approached me with an invitation to be interviewed on Michael Aspel's **The Six O'Clock Show** but, sensing that this show would ridicule the programme and trivialise the threat to it, I declined. Anyone who has seen that edition of the show will know that it was a wise decision! Several adults, including a Lollipop Patrol Lady who imitated a Dalek, commented on the 'kiddies show' while reporter Debbie Arnold reminisced about her favourite foes, the "cotton wool monsters" — apparently a reference to the web-gun wielding Yeti in THE WEB OF FEAR. In the studio, ace nostalgist Danny Baker, recalled to Mr Aspel his vivid memories of the first episode set in a junkyard where the TARDIS had been discovered by two schoolteachers named Mike and Sue...

In addition to ITN, Ian had also been contacted by *The Sun* and the 'Save Who' campaign was born, joined almost immediately by similar efforts by the *Daily Star*. I remember that one issue featured a photo of Ian having smashed his tv set in disgust at the BBC's announcement; naturally this was not his own set, but one which the newspaper had bought from a scrap merchant. On Thursday the 28th both national and local newspapers were running the story of the BBC's 'plot' to axe **Doctor Who** along with quotes from myself and some others, since not every paper had been able to reach me through the sheer volume of calls which I had taken on the previous day. I was amused (or was it astounded?) to learn from one paper's quotes that the Society apparently possessed an official historian for the series, one Mr Peter Haining

A few days later I was approached by *The Sun* myself, who wanted to picture some members in costume declaring war on the BBC. Again fearing that any such appearance would damage the credibility of the Society and its efforts, I suggested that the reporter contact 8 year-old Gareth Jenkins, who had featured recently on the **Jim'll Fix It** segment IN A FIX WITH SONTARANS. A photograph of Gareth clad in his Sixth Doctor costume, preparing to blast the BBC with the mezon gun with which he had been presented on Mr Saville's show, duly appeared. However cringeworthy such features might have been, they helped keep the issue alive in the minds of the general public.

The public furore continued unabated through the following week, fuelled by the press campaign. My leave came to an end and I returned to work on the afternoon of 28th February, and on the next day I was greatly surprised, if also somewhat relieved, to take a telephone call from the then Managing Director of BBC Television, Bill Cotton Jnr, pledging continuing support for the programme, which would now be rested for a limited period, and requesting that I now "call off the dogs". He told me of his intention to issue a press release covering most of what he had told me. The press release was issued, but while those compiling it had worded it carefully so it seemed the BBC was bowing to public pressure, careful analysis of it showed that the corporation's position had really not moved one iota. We could not relax...

As arranged during the telephone marathon of 27th February, that weekend several leading fans including Jeremy Bentham,, David Howe, Ian Levine, Dominic May, Patrick Mulkern and myself, together with *DWB*'s Gary Levy (as he was then known) and *DWM*'s Richard Marson, met at Jan Vincent-Rudzki's house to discuss various courses of action. These included encouraging a politely worded mass mailing to the BBC so that it would be informed of the views of fandom, which the cross section of people at the meeting felt it truly represented, and an additional mailshot to all current members of the ***Doctor Who** Appreciation Society* informing them of the actions being taken which was completed within forty-eight hours. In addition, the meeting asked that my existing decision to step down as Co-Ordinator following August's Panopticon should not made public, as it might have looked to the Society members that I had known of Michael Grade's announcement before taking my own decision.

The most significant step undertaken by this group of high profile fans was the drawing up of a letter replying to Mr Cotton's telephone call and the subsequent press release. This included also, what were to become, the standard arguments for the BBC continuing to produce the programme. The letter was short and firm but politely worded and I was assigned to deliver it in person to the hallowed Sixth Floor of Television Centre, where the management offices were located, so that it could not be said to have become 'lost in the post'. On the afternoon of Monday 4th March (having quickly negotiated one further day's leave), I was admitted through the corporation's security gates as a guest of Jan, who was then a BBC staff member. This plan worked smoothly and a letter was received from Mr Cotton shortly afterwards which re-iterated the assurances which he had made during the short telephone conversation.

I had also been approached by the producer of the Radio 4 programme **Start the Week...** to take part in that day's edition — apparently radio was not bound by the same internal policy decision as its television counterpart! On the show there was to be discussion, including questions concerning the fan campaign with other guests, hosted by Richard Baker. Even though I knew Mr Baker slightly, having served both his mother and himself as customers at my previous library posting, I found taking part somewhat daunting, as I have found all my **Who**-related media appearances to be. Quite why this sole radio interview left me even more tongue-tied than usual I have never understood; maybe it was because the radio show lasted for much longer than the television ones. But this allowed me to outline comprehensively the arguments for continuing to produce the programme drawn up on the previous day. I was paid a fee for my appearance on this occasion; but, since I have never believed that high profile fans should make money from their passion for the series, I donated what I was paid to the charity supported by the *Doctor in Distress* record.

A smaller group of leading fans met at Jan's again on the second weekend in March to discuss a response to Mr Cotton's letter. Again a brief but polite letter was thought through and typed, but this time it was posted. It did not seek a further reply, nor was one received.

The next step in this first campaign which I was involved with was to compile a compilation of all the television coverage of the 'crisis' so far with Ian Levine, which was aired at the *Appreciation Society*'s *Dwasocial 5* in May that year. By the time it came to be played to the attendees, the first rumours that the season length was to remain at more or less that of Season 22 despite a return to twenty-five minute episodes had begun to surface, and any thoughts of the campaign's victory had began to seem hollow.

Nevertheless, there's no doubt in my mind that without the prompt action taken by the group of then leading fans, and the immediate provision of advice to **Who** enthusiasts at large the series would have been swept away along with **Crackerjack** etc. It was tremendously satisfying to be become the figurehead of a, for once, united fandom and I can only wish that this unity had occurred for a far happier reason. However, with hindsight, I can see that all we gained was a respite of a further fifty six episodes for a series which had in fact well and truly had its heyday ... but I wouldn't have missed that fortnight's campaign for the world!

David Saunders
Coordinator of The Doctor Who Appreciation Society (Sep 1980 to Aug 1985)

SAVE OUR TARDIS!

DOCTOR WHO fans across the universe are battling to raise £1¼million to save their favourite programme from the axe.

The intrepid viewers are linking up in a desperate bid to rescue the Tardis traveller from his biggest ever threat—the BBC.

And yesterday, as American fans pledged the massive campaign collection, the Beeb agreed to consider their plans to save the programme.

The fans want to set up a separate company

By PHIL DAMPIER

to produce the 22-year-old sci-fi series together with the BBC.

They acted after BBC boss Michael Grade said he was "resting" the show to save cash to make new drama series.

Ron Katz, leader of more than 40,000 Dr Who supporters in the United States, said yesterday: "Fan club organisers were so shocked they stayed up all night to start "save the Doctor" campaigns.

"If every fan contributed a few dollars there would be enough money to save Dr Who for five years."

The BBC said yesterday that they would consider any serious offers.

Britain's top Who fan Ian Levine declared war on the BBC decision yesterday — by smashing his TV set!

Irate Ian, a 32-year-old record producer, ripped down his aerial and sent his licence to Mr Grade in protest.

The Sun Says and Franklin's View—Page 6

Ian Levine—with his smashed telly

Perfectly Adequate

Despite its violent reputation, Season 22's greatest fault was mediocrity, decides Anthony Brown. The problem was that OK simply wasn't good enough right now...

THE SHADOW of the cancellation hangs heavy over season twenty-two, distorting any assessment of its merits and faults. This, according to the explanations offered by various BBC officials once the media storm had broken over their heads, is the season when the poor quality of current Doctor Who became so obvious that things simply couldn't go on.

Of course, all the evidence suggests the BBC's criticism of Season 22 came after the fact, once they'd been forced to justify the money-saving decision to suspend production of the show — certainly Eric Saward recalls that his head of department had never demanded changes to any script or voiced any criticism until that time, and would only do so once in the future, on the first script to enter production a year later. But the BBC's claim that the show had gone off the rails marked a watershed for fan opinion. Until 1985, individual stories could be below par or even heretical, and fans might regret trends towards excessive humour, but aside from antipodean outrage against Colin Baker, fan opinion had tended to hold that the series as a whole was in pretty good shape, more or less. Now, everything was fair game as fandom sought to discover what was wrong with Season 22, and prove the series as a whole innocent and ready for another 20 years. No season had been subjected to such relentless critical scrutiny in the past, and this was to become the pattern of the future, with fandom split between two vocal groups, one appreciative of the current shows, the other determined to save the concept from current mistakes.

But is this criticism of Season 22 at all valid? Overall, it's simply average. With the two exceptions of REVELATION and TIMELASH, each story is competently put together considering **Doctor Who**'s budget, but lacks that extra oomph which makes it stand-out from the crowd and its own weaknesses. It's difficult to think of another season which is as blandly consistent in its general quality apart from Season Eleven — the last effort of the long-running partnership between Terrance Dicks and Barry Letts. The resemblance isn't a coincidence — between them Eric Saward and John Nathan-Turner had accumulated almost nine years of experience on the series (not including Nathan-Turner's time as production unit manager), a figure only the Dicks-Letts partnership could match. By now, they knew **Doctor Who** and its limitations backwards, and had learnt to work within them.

Unfortunately that isn't what **Doctor Who** needs. It's equally significant that REVELATION stands out. As on THE CAVES OF ANDROZANI, and as Gary Russell observed in **IN-VISION 84**, Graeme Harper was determined to make his mark, gleefully somersaulting the obstacles and budgetary restrictions. John Nathan Turner had that attitude when he took over, but young turks mature rapidly on a show as troubled as **Doctor Who**, and as in any job satisfaction that things are running smoothly soon becomes more important than breaking the mould. But as **Doctor Who**'s history shows, there's only a couple of years in each mould.

So the end result is largely bland. But each story has distinctive strengths and weaknesses.

ATTACK OF THE CYBERMEN gets an unfair press due to fannish disappointment — and from that point of view it deserves that criticism. There's little point in invoking the memory of the then near-deified TOMB OF THE CYBERMEN without delivering on fan hopes of seeing the Tomb opening sequence recreated, while the myriad references to other Cyberstories, overt and thematic, are simply over-egging the pudding.

But ATTACK did very well with the public, and you can see why. It's a blockbuster action movie, toned down for a BBC budget (and modern digital effects could certainly create the Cryons envisaged by the script — wispy ghostlike creatures forever on the point of melting away). Much has been made of ATTACK's alienating and overly complexity, but this only becomes apparent if you trouble yourself with complex Laws of Time. To the general public, the situation's simple — the Cybermen are going to invade Earth, and lose, next year, so they've stolen a time machine and are going to cheat. What's so complex?

The rest of the plot consists of a series of set-pieces just like **The Avengers** or an action film. The diamond raid, the Cybermen base in the sewers, the TARDIS' flight to the Tombs, Lytton's escape from the Cybermen, and finally the assault on Cybercontrol. There's the potential for a Bond-like action adventure with spectacular stunts in stunning locations spanning the universe here.

However, ATTACK attempts to intertwine these strands instead of presenting each as a bite-size chunk which leaves a single thread connecting it to the next. As a result, several plot threads simply peter out, and at least one — the Cybermen's base on the dark side of the Moon — hangs there unrealised, like a major plot point from an early draft which proved unnecessary, but wasn't removed in editing. It's the resolution of the various stories which is ATTACK's major fault. The focus on supporting characters, one of many influences from ANDROZANI this year, is all very well (and the late addition of the Bates/Stratton story is one of the best things about the story). But Saward's way of dropping these characters once their usefulness is over isn't. If a character can meet an entirely arbitrary death without some feeling of dramatic justice, the audience feels cheated of the time they spent urging them on. And, of course, an ending which relies on the Doctor engineering an explosion and using a gun is missing something somewhere.

At first glance, VENGENCE ON VAROS stands out thanks to its innovative concept of letting some of the characters join the audience, and this intelligent concept makes it the most intriguing story of the season. But the plot through which this concept is advanced is rather more basic — a throughback to the days of THE WAR GAMES and COLONY IN SPACE, when a story could be extended ad infinitum by the addition of another War Zone or yet another rebellion by colonists or IMC men. Had VENGEANCE run into the same timing problems TIMELASH encountered, there'd have been no need for an artificial argument — simply add another Danger Zone to the Punishment Dome, and watch the Doctor spend ten minutes thinking his way out of the latest skill game.

True there is another plot running alongside, as the Governor is pushed to the point of making his break with tradition, but this doesn't actually resolve the story — that honour falls to the arbitrary moment when Quillam and the Chief are hoist on their own petard, and an offscreen development which should (if anything) have worsened the Varosians' plight. In one fell swoop they've lost their monopoly on Zeiton production and their growing TV export industry. You can't imagine the Varosian economy being able to afford tax cuts next year.

But this plot is more than made up for by the sheer zest of the concept, the acting, and an intriguing portrayal of the banality of evil — there's the OTT villainy of Sil to keep the kiddies happy, while Forbes Collins' Chief is the real villain of the piece — smug, uncaring, utterly self-centred — and in control. A Sir Humphrey for the space age.

Effective villainy is also THE MARK OF THE RANI's great plus. In her debut story, at least, the Rani is a genuinely original creation, a neutral character devoid of megalomania who's all the more dangerous for that. The storyline is also a plus, until fatally undermined by the trees. Whatever the Bakers' other faults — and the outrageous dialogue and half-baked science of the future is already there in embryo (if Peri's sleeping draft is an adequate cure for lack of brain fluid, wouldn't a biochemist of the Rani's stature have brewed one by now?) — they know how to structure a plot. THE MARK OF THE RANI ticks over nicely from start to finish.

But what is there which makes MARK OF THE RANI stand out? Only its location filming and a feeling of being somewhere, somewhen, else which is much greater than that produced by THE TWO DOCTORS. But without human drama of the quality highlighted in THE CRUSADE to accompany it, the viewer can get period atmosphere better elsewhere. Again, MARK OF THE RANI fails to offer something distinctive.

The great disappointment of the season is THE TWO DOCTORS. Again, the end result is average, but you can see how it should have been so much more. Apparently blessed with overseas filming, a substantial length and the return of a popular monster and the much-loved senior Doctor, as it turns out, each of these aspects proves something of a curse.

While Patrick Troughton's return is superb for as long as he's allowed centre stage, and his presence encourages Colin Baker to grow into the part elsewhere, the title THE TWO DOCTORS is hardly a draw. THE THREE DOCTORS was a benefit match, showcasing the show's greatest stars. THE FIVE DOCTORS was more and better, at least in terms of hype, despite the presence of a substitute on the team. But from that point of view THE TWO DOCTORS is a comedown, as if the reserves are on the pitch. Only two? We want bigger, better. Better to have called it THE ANDROGUM INHERITANCE, leaving Troughton's perfectly portrayed return as a bonus.

The location filming is a similar disappointment. Peter Moffatt displays the skill with period atmosphere which made his first stories so excellent, but the desire to highlight Seville gets in the way of the plot. And what is there to showcase? Nicola Bryant recounts how Peter Moffat was keen that each shot showcase Spain, but also commented on the isolated location, mentioning that crowd control only became a problem in the centre of Seville. It's a point which shows how THE TWO DOCTORS was shot according to a professional's viewpoint, instead of thinking of the viewers. Hopefully, only the most technically literate viewer would spot that it was a real hacienda, not a studio mock-up like the cellar — that is, after all, the point of the suspension of disbelief. Much of THE TWO DOCTORS relies on breaking that essential quality, by hoping that the viewer will spot the money spent on the location filming and recognise the location is for real.

Similarly, Seville could offer a feeling of somewhere different, but so should any story, and the juxtaposition of the real Seville with the studio-bound Karfel simply undermines the latter without real benefits to the former. Seville offers none of the memorable images such tales should invoke — Daleks in Westminster, Cybermen at St Pauls, the Doctor at the Eiffel Tower... nothing to make you think it's immediate, it could happen, and push suspension of disbelief to a new level. For most of the audience there's nothing familiar in the location which cuts into a gut imagery... perhaps *Sontarans Uncovered in Ibiza* would have been more effective? Assuming, of course, they'd been able to build accurate Sontaran costumes which could actually be worn in the heat of a Spanish location...

Like its successor, TIMELASH stands out amongst this catalogue of competent but largely uninspiring tales — though for very different reasons. But in many senses its poor reputation is underserved. Marked out from the start as the budget-saver of the season, it's almost a throwback to the Graham Williams era, with fresh-from-drama-school rebels coming and going before their names can sink in. Yet the first episode is effective and intriguing, and the Timelash cabinet itself would a be rather nice design if it wasn't supposed to be an object of fear and dread. It's only once the tinsel of the Timelash appears and the plot collapses into a time filling conclusion in the second episode that it falls apart. At worst, TIMELASH is a demonstration that **Doctor Who** has a limited budget, limited time, and the price of decent production elsewhere is a cut-price tale produced from the best of the scripts the editor would have rejected had he had the budget to commission more. Again, competence rules, even if it's the fatalistic competence of accepting that its better to sacrifice one story than six.

Except... TIMELASH takes that attitude to an extreme. As **IN-VISION 83** pointed out, it's arguably the least ambitious story of all time. Glen McCoy makes little use of the opportunities presented by HG Wells' presence, presenting a basic 'He didn't make it up' tale which doesn't bear comparison with *Time After Time*.

Then the season suddenly bounces back with a tale which shows what can be achieved when straight-forward competence becomes the foundation for something more, and a string of outstanding elements come together. There's a script which unashamedly brings Saward's guest characters to the fore and shamelessly raids the most effective elements from the rest of the season, and a director who simply refuses to let anything get in his way.

In the midst of this is Colin Baker's Doctor, whose growing pains were spread over an unfairly lengthy period. THE TWIN DILEMMA established the image of a bombastic bully, which carried over into the early episodes of the new season, perhaps because the writers had taken onboard the portrayal they'd seen in 1984. Yet from THE TWO DOCTORS onwards, each story shows Baker maturing into the role, though his performance is often influenced by his co-stars — alongside Patrick Troughton he becomes Doctorish, against Paul Darrow he goes over the top (but only in those scenes), and among the character actors of REVELATION he becomes low-key and commanding, making his mark in his few scenes as the Doctor should. Despite a poor start in stories which demanded he shout repeatedly, Baker was clearly making the part his own by season's end.

The tragedy is that his tenure seemed much longer than it was. With hindsight, THE TWIN DILEMMA's emphasis of the very pragmatic idea that a Doctor's first story portrays an unstable personality which has yet to settle in (leaving the actor room to find his feet and move on) was a bad mistake. THE TWIN DILEMMA's Doctor stuck, and took some time to lose. But it's worth remembering that Tom Baker got as many stories and almost as many episodes in his first year as his namesake did in his entire three year tenure. How would we view the fourth Doctor if there'd been a nine-month gap after his clowning performance in ROBOT and the grandeur of THE ARK IN SPACE, and the series as a whole had been cancelled (reportedly due to excessive violence) after the strangulations of PYRAMIDS OF MARS, with Baker sacked on the Controller's orders after his pistol-wielding antics in THE SEEDS OF DOOM? As someone who mistook shouting people's name very loudly ("Scorby!") with a rounded performance, perhaps.

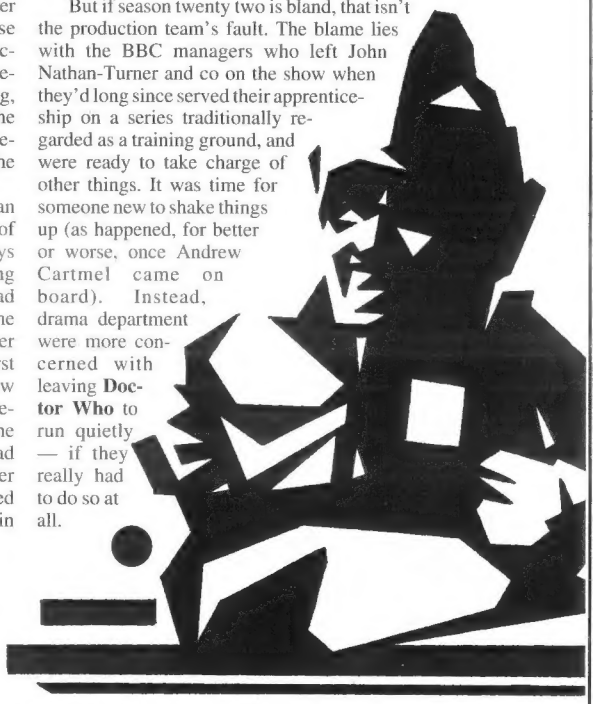
Violence is, of course, the single word which has come to be associated with Season 22. This is unfair — it's only the presentation of violence that's changed, not its amount, though the prominence of blood is unusual.

There's no lingering close-ups, no Peckinpah-esque slow motion — it's just that laser beams and interrogation effects have been replaced by something real, with consequences that last more than a scene (contrast Lytton's interrogation with Romana's immediately forgotten torture in THE ARMAGEDDON FACTOR). The violence of Season 22 is direct, and real, but while this is certainly a break with the recent past, it follows in a tradition established in the Hartnell years, as the relics of the Australian censors' vaults show.

But this approach is out of keeping with the spirit of the televisual times. 1985 was the heyday of **The A-Team,** when a spray-fired machine gun would only ever take out tyres, and spectacular car crash would be followed by dubbed-on comments of "You Ok?", "I'm Ok," to reassure the viewer that even the villains are safe. When the infamous **Dynasty** massacre could be presented with all the style and grace of a choreographed ballet, backed by the ironic tones of *Sheep May Safely Graze*, and everyone walked out safe after the contract negotiations. In the midst of this, **Doctor Who** presents violence as something real and nasty — and that couldn't be tolerated.

So there we have it — a chronicle of simple competence in the face of adversity, resulting in a season which is for the most part no worse, and no better, than you might expect. But simple competence isn't enough to make **Doctor Who** worthwhile. Matching its ambitions to its limitations is a recipe for mediocrity — its strength is heroic, over-reaching failure, which sometimes bursts into glorious triumph. REVELATION provides a good example of the latter.

But if season twenty two is bland, that isn't the production team's fault. The blame lies with the BBC managers who left John Nathan-Turner and co on the show when they'd long since served their apprenticeship on a series traditionally regarded as a training ground, and were ready to take charge of other things. It was time for someone new to shake things up (as happened, for better or worse, once Andrew Cartmel came on board). Instead, drama department were more concerned with leaving **Doctor Who** to run quietly — if they really had to do so at all.



Fully Booked

Books of the Season:

ATTACK OF THE CYBERMEN
April 89 p/b
VENGEANCE ON VAROS
December 87 h/b, May 88 p/b
THE MARK OF THE RANI
February 86 h/b, June 86 p/b
THE TWO DOCTORS
August 85 h/b, December 85 p/b
TIMELASH
December 85 h/b, April 86 p/b
REVELATION OF THE DALEKS
Not published

Books of the Year:

February	THE AWAKENING
March	THE MIND OF EVIL
April	THE MYTH MAKERS
May	THE INVASION
June	THE KROTONS
July	THE GUN FIGHTERS
August	THE TWO DOCTORS
September	THE TIME MONSTER
October	THE TWIN DILEMMA
November	GALAXY 4
December	TIMELASH

IN 1985, Target released their one-hundreth adaptation of a Doctor Who story. Sadly, John Nathan-Turner's cheery introductory comment of "Here's to the next 100 titles" in THE TWO DOCTORS novel must have had an unlikely ring, even in 1985, given the questions hanging over the series' future.

Amongst the season 22 adaptations, only Saward and Holmes' efforts stand out amongst what was very nearly almost a collection of sub-standard "he said, she said" novelisations that seem pitched at a very junior audience indeed. Whilst even Pip and Jane made some effort to add a little back-story to their literary magnum opus, one wonders why McCoy and Martin bothered at all. As with the previous seasons novelisations, only a Dalek story by Saward is missing, and given the way his writing style was progressing, and the sheer quality of the script of REVELATION OF THE DALEKS, there is little doubt that any adaptation by Saward would have shone out. Although, this could be seen as a twisting of the old adage, "in the land of the blind the one-eyed man is king".

It should be remembered, however, that the majority of these books emerged over thirteen years ago, when the average age of the fan base was younger and it had not been exposed to the "too broad and deep for the small screen" **New Adventures** that were to set the benchmark for future literary expectations.

As was the increasing trend, the majority of the season's script writers chose to novelise their own scripts, bar Paula Moore. Theoretically, a novelisation by the originator should offer a more empathetic interpretation of the script, yet, the season 22 novels offer little support to this train of thought. The novels are almost uniformly characterised by sense of detachment and lack of personality, and are, on the whole literally bare-bones adaptations. Saward's adaptation of ATTACK OF THE CYBERMEN remedies this a little. But on the whole, rather like the series, the range of novels seemed rather over-tired by this point.

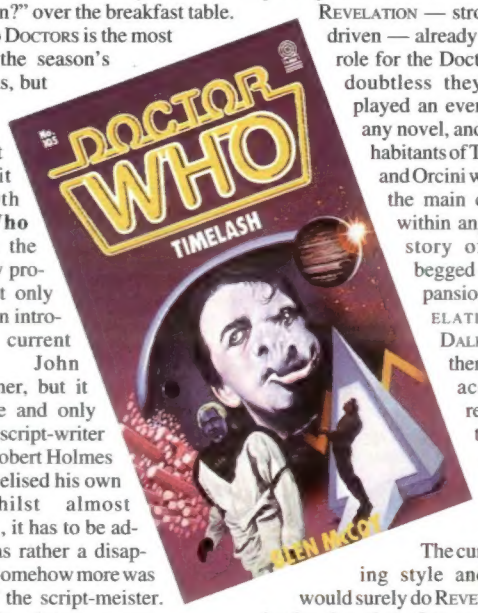
The presentation of several novels reaches a nadir, with the covers being deeply unattractive to say the least. VENGEANCE ON VAROS is the epitome of this, with artist David McAllister failing to grasp the notion that "less is more" and lobbing a horrific hotch-potch of twisted images on the front cover. No doubt being unable to use Colin Baker's visage for contractual reasons was difficult, and no doubt made it hard to present a uniform image easily associated with the series, but some of these covers were just downright tacky and childish. These may have been a range of books pitched primarily at children, but this never necessarily meant the covers had to look like they were designed in a third year art class.

The first story of the season was the last to emerge in print, and of what is on offer is perhaps the best of the five novels. Saward clearly enjoyed expanding on what was without a doubt originally his concept anyway, with Lytton and his criminal cronies benefiting characterwise, although the whole time-travel subplot remains about as clear as mud. But a bit of pathos has always gone a great deal further than a bit of plot in **Doctor Who**.

VENGEANCE ON VAROS merely suffers from being very dull. Philip Martin's interpretation of his own script cannot be faulted. However, on-screen the story was very image driven, with the sets and effects and costumes doing much to carry the concept. Whilst certainly the character of the Governor benefits from being expanded way beyond Martin Jarvis' onscreen portrayal, no one else does: least of all Sil, who without the benefit of Nabil Shaban's slimy and slithery delivery falls swiftly into predictable megalomania territory. It is also hard to see how a parable about the evils of television violence could possibly translate into the printed page without losing something of the power of the allegory on the way. As sociologist Marshall McLuhan pointed out, the medium is, after all, the message.

THE MARK OF THE RANI, like KINDA before it, suffers from an unfortunate association with rubber props, offering it a reputation that threatened to eclipse its better points. However RANI also suffered in parts from a nasty attack of verbal diarrhoea that was not given a big dose of Diacalm at the novel stage. Perhaps Pip and Jane Baker subsist entirely on alphabeti spaghetti, or were born with a genetic penchant for pompous vacuous verbosity, but sentences such as "Fortuitous would be a more apposite epithet!" really don't improve with keeping. Especially when you remember that all these books would have gone straight into the junior fiction section of the countries local libraries. No doubt parents up and down the country cursed Pip and Jane when their **Doctor Who**-obsessed offspring plagued them with questions like "Mummy, what's an asinine cretin?" over the breakfast table.

THE TWO DOCTORS is the most striking of the season's novelisations, but not necessarily for its content. Not only was it "The 100th **Doctor Who** Novel!" as the cover loudly proclaimed, not only did it have an introduction by current producer John Nathan-Turner, but it was the one and only time veteran script-writer and editor Robert Holmes actually novelised his own work. Whilst almost "charming" , it has to be admitted it was rather a disappointment. Somehow more was expected of the script-meister. As obvious in print as on screen, Holmes seems to have been fond of his creation of Oscar Botcherby, and as expected the cliched but much-loved "Holmesian Double-Acts" come strongly to the fore. Little was changed, although the character of Dastari possesses a far more obvious ruthless streak in print than Laurence Payne ever hinted at onscreen.



Glen McCoy's adaptation of TIMELASH is, as mentioned, a straight forward affair, which is particularly disappointing considering the stylistic advances made by Target's range in 1985. With Donald Cotton employing tongue-in-cheek, first person writing in THE MYTH MAKERS and THE GUNFIGHTERS, there's no reason why McCoy couldn't have grasped the opportunities offered by the presence of HG Wells, perhaps by presenting TIMELASH as Wells' writing — the autobiographical first novel he raided for his later works. As it is, McCoy even passes up the chance to reuse familiar Wellsian phrases such as 'In those closing years of the 19th century, no one could have imagined....", though he does provide a justification for the Board's resurrection by introducing an entire army of freeze-dried Borad clones, the new population of Karfel, for the Doctor to deal with.

As with the previous season, legal wrangles with Terry Nation — and subsequently his estate — have prevented the Dalek story from being novelised. Given that REVELATION OF THE DALEKS is a firm fan favourite, and often hailed as clearly the best story of the season, its continued absence on our shelves is perhaps more of tragedy than the non-appearance of RESURRECTION OF THE DALEKS.

Saward's previous adaptations offer a strong hint of what we might have been able to expect. Both THE TWIN DILEMMA and ATTACK OF THE CYBERMEN suggest that he is at his happiest writing about supporting characters rather than the leads. REVELATION — strongly character driven — already had a minimal role for the Doctor and Peri, so doubtless they would have played an even lesser part in any novel, and instead the inhabitants of Tranquil Repose and Orcini would have been the main character force within any novel. If any story of that season begged for further expansion, it was REVELATION OF THE DALEKS. Hopefully there may yet be an accommodation reached between the writer and Nation's estate and we may yet see something emerge. The current adult writing style and word count would surely do REVELATION far more justice than that of ten years could have done. It might be worth the wait .

Amanda Murray

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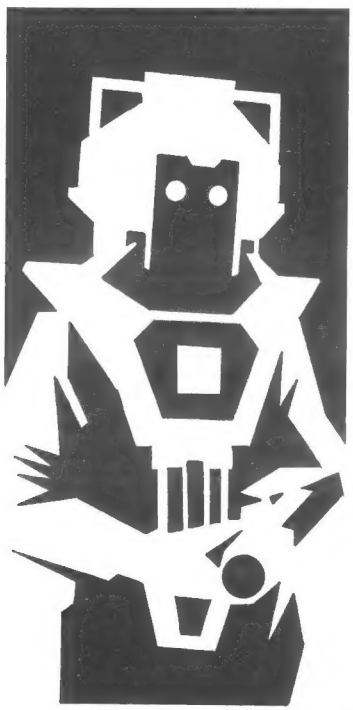

Film:
Aces High (Jack Gold, 1976)
Bedazzled (Stanley Donen, 1968)
The Body Said No! (1950)
Brief Encounter (David Lean, 1946)
Britannia Hospital (Lindsay Anderson, 1982)
Bullshot (Dick Clement, 1983)
Caesar and Cleopatra (Gabriel Pascal, 1946)
The Case of Charles Peace (1949)
Casino Royale (Huston/Hughes/Parrish/McGrath/Guest, 1967)
The Chain (1985)
The City of the Dead (1960)
Come Play with Me (1977)
Corridor of Mirrors (Terence Young, 1948)
Curse of the Crimson Altar (Vernon Sewell, 1968)
Dad, the Angel & Me (1995)
Danny Jones (1971)
Deathline (Garty Sherman, 1972)
The Case of the Missing Heiress (1950)
The Final Test (Anthony Asquith, 1953)
Glitterball (1977)
The Great McGonagall (1974)
The Haunting (Robert Wise, 1963)
Helter Skelter (1949)
Henry V (Laurence Olivier, 1944)
Here Come the Munsters (1995
The Horror of It All (1963)
Hotel Reserve (Comfort/Greence/Hanbury, 1944)
I Know Where I'm Going! (Powell/Pressberger, 1945)
Ivanhoe (Richard Thorpe, 1952)
Julius Caesar (Stuart Burge, 1970)
Latin Quarter (1946)
The Land That Time Forgot (Kevin Connor, 1975)
The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp (Powell/Pressberger, 1943)
London Suite (1996)
The Man in Black (1949)
Man on the Run (1948)
Menu for Murder (1990
Miss Pilgrim's Progress (1950)
Murder by Decree (Bob Clark, 1979)
My Brother's Keeper (Alfred Roome, 1948)
The Naked World of Harrison Marks (1965)
The Night Comes Too Soon (1947)
Night Train for Inverness (1960)
Night Boat to Dublin (1945)
Oh! What a Lovely War (Richard Attenborough, 1969)
The Old Crowd (1978)
Ordeal by Innocence (Desmond Avis, 1984)
Paul Temple Returns (1952)
Pink String and Sealing Wax (1945)
Poor Cow (Kenneth Loach, 1967)
The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie (1969)
The Queen of Spades (Ronald Neame, 1949)
The Return of the Shaggy Dog (1987)
Rogue Male (Clive Donner, TV1976)
Room to Let (1950)
Rough Cut (Donald Siegal, 1980)
Silver Fleet (Powell/Pressberger, 1943)
The Slipper and the Rose (Bryan Forbes, 1976)
Something for Everyone (Harold Prince, 1970)
The Story of Shirley Yorke (1948)
Stranger at My Door (1950)
Subterfuge (Peter Graham Scott, 1969)
Suspended Alibi (Alfred Shaughnessy, 1956)
Suspicion (1987)
Vengeance Is Mine (1948)
The White Unicorn (1947)
Woman Hater (Terence Young, 1949)
The Wrong Box (Bryan Forbes, 1966)
The Yellow Canary (Herbert Wilcox, 1943)
Young Winston (Richard Attenborough, 1972)

Radio:
The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy (Radio 4, 1978-80)
Exploration Earth: The Time Machine (Radio 4)
I'm Sorry I'll Read That Again (Radio 4)
The Million Pound Radio Show (Radio 4)
The Nick Revell Show (Radio 4)
Pirate Radio 4 (Radio 4, 1985)
Start the Week (Radio 4)
Taptoe through the Telephones
Week Ending (Radio 4)

Television:
Allo Allo (BBC1, 1984-92)
The A-Team
The Avengers: Bizarre (ABC, 30/5/69); You'll Catch Your Death (ABC: 17/10/1968)
Babylon 5: Soul Mates (PTN, 4/12/1994)
The BBC Television Shakespeare: *All's Well That Ends Well* (BBC2, 4/1/81); *Love's Labour's Lost* (BBC2, 5/1/85); *The Tragedy of Coriolanus* (BBC2, 21/4/84)
Beverly Hills, 90210: Pride and Prejudice (Fox, 22/10/1997)
The Black Adder: Witchsmeller Pursuivant (BBC1, 13/7/83)
Blake's 7: The City at the Edge of the World (BBC1, 11/2/80)
The Blonde Bombshell (ITV, 1999)
Boy Meets World: Boys II Mensa (29/10/1993)
Breakfast Time (BBC1, 1983-...)
Brimstone
Buck Rogers in the 25th Century
Callan: I Never Wanted the Job (Thames, 19/4/72)
Caroline in the City: Caroline and the Ombudsman (22/4/97)
Dear John (BBC1, 1986-87)
Dear John (NBC, 1989-91)
Department S: The Ghost of Mary Burnham (ITC, 18/2/70)
Drop the Dead Donkey (C4, 1990-98)
EastEnders (BBC1, 1985-...)
Ellen: Saint Ellen (28/9/1994)
Flambards (Yorkshire, 26/1-20/4/79)
French and Saunders (BBC, 16/3/87)
Friends: The One with Ross's Wedding, Part 2 (5/7/98)
George & Leo: The Cameo (3/11/1997)
Harry Enfield's Television Programme (BBC2, 1990, 1992)
The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy (BBC2, 1981)
The Invisible Man (BBC1, 4/9-9/10/84)
Mad About You: Mad About You (2/2/95)
N8 (BBC2, 1995)
Miss Marple: The Body in the Library (BBC1, 26/12-28/12/84)
The Naked Civil Servant (1975)
Nationwide (BBC)
News at One (ITN)
Nicholas Nickleby (BBC1, 27/3-1/5/77)
Perry Mason: The Case of the Fatal Framing
The Professionals: Foxhole on the Roof (LWT, 7/11/82)
Q.E.D: The Infernal Device
Red Dwarf: Better Than Life (BBC2, 13/9/88)
Robin of Sherwood (HTV, 1984-86)
The Saint: The People Importers (ITC, 22/12/68)
Sapphire and Steel: Adventure Five (ATV, 1979-82)
Secret Army (BBC1, 1977-79)
The Six O'Clock Show (LWT)
Spitting Image (LWT, 1984-96)
Star Cops (BBC2, 1987)
Star Trek (NBC, 1966-69)
Swap Shop (BBC1, 1976-82)
The Sweeney: Down to You, Brother (Thames, 22/11/76)
Tenko (BBC1, 1981-85)
That Was the Week That Was (BBC, 1963)
Tiswas (ITV)
The Tripods (BBC1, 1984-85)
Upstairs, Downstairs: The Wages of Sin (LWT, 12/1/73)
V (NBC, 1983)
V - The Final Battle (NBC, 1984)

Music and records:
Gymnopedie No. 1 (Eric Satie, recording from Bourneville Selection, CBS)
Doctor Who and the Pescatons
The Logic of Empire
The Mark of Kane
TV21: The Chase

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Attack of the Cybermen (IN-VISION 79)
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